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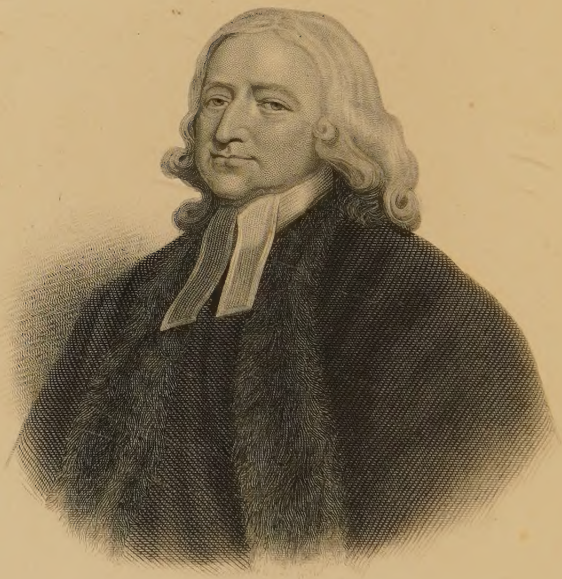
THE LIFE AND TIMES OF THE Rev. JOHN WESLEY, M.A.



JOHN WESLEY, M.A.

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From a Painting by Romney

(see page 565)

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K. STEVE McCORMICK

THE

LIFE AND TIMES

OF THE

REV. JOHN WESLEY, M.A.,

Founder of the Methodists.

BY THE

REV. L. TYERMAN,

AUTHOR OF "THE LIFE OF THE REV. GEORGE WHITEFIELD;"
"THE OXFORD METHODISTS," &c.

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CHAPTER I.

WESLEY AT HOME, AT SCHOOL, AND AT COLLEGE.
1703—1725.

JOHN WESLEY was born at Epworth, in the county of Lincoln, on the 17th of June, 1703,[1] and was the son of Samuel and Susannah Wesley, the former being the learned, laborious, and godly rector of the Epworth parish from about the year 1696 to his death in 1735. The Wesley family consisted of nineteen children, but, of these, nine died in infancy. The name of one of the dead infants was John, and the name of another Benjamin; and when the subject of this biography was born, his mother united the two names by calling him John Benjamin. Second names are of little use, and are often troublesome, and probably for this reason Wesley's second name was one which he never used.[2] 1703

When Wesley was born, Queen Anne was commencing the twelve years of English sovereignty which some have regarded as the Augustan age of English learning. War was raging on the continent, and, at home, an embittered fight was being fought between fiery Churchmen and fierce Dissenters. Anne warmly favoured the high church party; and to

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[1] To prevent confusion, the reader is reminded that in 1751 the old English calendar was set aside, and that introduced by Pope Gregory XIII., in 1582, substituted in its place. This was done by act of Parliament for the purpose of harmonizing the computation of time in England with that of the rest of Europe. In consequence of this alteration, the anniversary of Wesley's birth, since 1752, has been, not the 17th, but the 28th of June.

[2] See Crowther's "Portraiture of Methodism."

1703 augment Church livings, gave out of the royal income "the first-fruits and the tenths," amounting to £16,000 a year. While Wesley was yet an infant, the Whigs raised the cry of "the Church in danger;" but Parliament passed a resolution that the cry was unfounded, and that those who gave it birth were enemies to the queen, the Church, and the kingdom. Five years after this, Dr. Sacheverell preached his firebrand sermon in St. Paul's Cathedral, and threw the nation into a state of unparalleled excitement, the ultimate result of which was, the Tories became more powerful than ever; and Queen Anne, in meeting her Parliament in 1710, no longer condescended to use the word *toleration* in reference to Dissenters, but spoke of *indulgence* to be allowed "to scrupulous consciences," while, after a long continued struggle, the high church party succeeded in passing the obnoxious bill against occasional conformity. All this occurred during Wesley's childhood.

At the time of Wesley's birth, his brother Samuel was a sprightly boy, thirteen years of age, and a few months afterwards was sent to Westminster School, where he became distinguished for his scholarship and genius, and soon obtained a host of literary friends, from Lord Oxford, the Mecænas of his age, down to Addison, Atterbury, Pope, and Prior. Emilia Wesley, so gifted and so beautiful, was a year younger than Samuel, and was developing her exquisite sensibility and taste under the mental and moral cultivation of her mother. The ill-fated Susannah was a frolicsome child, eight years old. Mary, already deformed by an early sickness and the carelessness of her nurse, had arrived at the age of seven, and was fast becoming the favourite of her father's family. The almost unequalled Mehetabel was six, and was so advanced in learning that two years afterwards she read the New Testament in Greek. Anne was yet an infant; and Martha, Charles, and Keziah were still unborn.

In the year of Wesley's nativity, his father was writing his "History of the Old and New Testament, in Verse;" and also had the pleasure or mortification (we hardly know which) of having his pamphlet on Dissenting academies surreptitiously published by a man to whom it had long before been sent as a private letter. Before Wesley was three years old

his father was ruthlessly thrust into gaol for debt; and before he was six the parsonage was destroyed by fire. When the fire occurred, his brother Charles was an infant not two months old, and he, with John, three of their sisters, and their nurse, were all in the same room, and fast asleep. Being aroused, the nurse seized Charles, and bid the others follow. The three sisters did as they were bidden, but John was left sleeping. The venerable rector counted heads, and found John was wanting. At the same instant, a cry was heard. The frantic father tried to ascend the burning stairs, but found it to be impossible. He then dropped upon his knees in the blazing hall, and despairing of the rescue of his child, commended him to God. Meanwhile John had mounted a chest and was standing at the bedroom window. Quick as thought, one man placed himself against the wall, and another stood upon his shoulders, and just a moment before the roof fell in with a fearful crash the child was rescued through the window, and safely "plucked as a brand from the burning" house. 1709 Age 6

Our information respecting Wesley's childhood is extremely limited. If we strip off all the luxuriant verbiage in which imaginative writers have indulged, the naked facts are the following.

Wesley, like all the other members of his father's family, was indebted for his elementary education to his mother. The principles upon which she acted were unique. When the child was one year old, he was taught to fear the rod, and, if he cried at all, to cry in softened tones. Wesley long afterwards, in his sermon on the education of children, enforces his mother's practice, urging parents never to give a child a thing for which it cries, on the ground that to do so would be a recompence for crying, and he would certainly cry again.

Another of Mrs. Wesley's principles of action was to limit her children to three meals a day. Eating and drinking between meals was strictly prohibited. All the children were washed and put to bed by eight o'clock, and, on no account, was a servant to sit by a child till it fell asleep.

The whole of the Wesley children were taught the Lord's Prayer as soon as they could speak, and repeated it every morning and every night. Rudeness was never seen amongst

1709 Age 6 them ; and on no account were they allowed to call each other by their proper names without the addition of brother or sister, as the case might be. Six hours a day were spent at school ; and loud talking, playing, and running into the yard, garden, or street, without permission, was rigorously forbidden. None of them, except Kezzy, was taught to read till five years old, and then only a single day was allowed wherein to learn the letters of the alphabet, great and small—a task which all of them accomplished except Mary and Anne, who were a day and a half before they knew them perfectly. Psalms were sung every morning when school was opened, and also every night when the duties of the day were ended. In addition to all this, at the commencement and close of every day, each of the elder children took one of the younger and read the Psalms appointed for the day and a chapter in the Bible, after which they severally went to their private devotions.

Mrs. Wesley, assisted by her husband, seems to have been the sole instructor of her daughters, and also of her sons, until the latter were sent to school in London ; and never was there a family of children who did their teacher greater credit.

From early childhood, John was remarkable for his sober and studious disposition, and seemed to feel himself answerable to his reason and his conscience for everything he did. He would do nothing without first reflecting on its fitness and propriety. If asked, out of the common way of meals, to have, for instance, a piece of bread or fruit, he would answer with the coolest unconcern, "I thank you ; I will think of it." To argue about a thing seemed instinctive, and was carried to such a length that on one occasion his father almost chid him, saying, "Child, you think to carry everything by dint of argument ; but you will find how little is ever done in the world by close reasoning." "I profess, sweetheart," said the rector in a pet to Mrs. Wesley, "I profess, sweetheart, I think our Jack would not attend to the most pressing necessities of nature, unless he could give a reason for it." [1]

With all this meditative reasoning, there was mixed devotion. It is a remarkable fact, scarce paralleled, that such was his consistency of conduct, that his father admitted him

[1] Clarke's "Wesley Family," vol. ii., p. 321.

to the communion table when he was only eight years old ;[1] and he himself informs us that, until he was about the age of ten, he had not sinned away that "washing of the Holy Ghost," which he received in baptism.[2] 1713 Age 10

Between the age of eight and nine the small-pox attacked him ; but he bore the terrible affliction with manly and Christian fortitude. At the time, his father was in London, and his mother writing him remarks: "Jack has borne his disease bravely, like a man, and indeed like a Christian, without complaint."[3]

This is all that is known respecting Wesley during his childhood years at Epworth. Imagination might conjure up his early thinkings, passions, and attachments, the localities he loved to visit, and the sports, fun, and frolic in which he occasionally indulged ; but history, on such subjects, is entirely silent ; and for want of its honest statements we look at him in the grave and sober aspect in which facts present him.

While yet a child, only ten and a half years old, Wesley passed from under the tutelage of his accomplished mother, and became a pupil at the Charterhouse, London. For his son's admission into this distinguished school, the Epworth rector was indebted to the friendly services of the Duke of Buckingham, at that time the Lord Chamberlain of the royal household.[4]

The privilege was great, and, to the day of his death, John Wesley loved the place of his early education, and was accustomed to walk through its courts and grounds once every year. He was not without hardships ; but he bore them bravely. Among other acts of cruelty, the elder boys were accustomed, in addition to their own share of animal food, to take by force that which was apportioned to the younger scholars ; and, in consequence of this, for a considerable part of the five years that young Wesley spent at the Charterhouse, the only solid food he got was bread. There was one thing, however, which contributed to his general flow of

[1] Benson's "Apology," p. 1. [2] Wesley's Works, vol. i., p. 92.
[3] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 116.
[4] The following is a memorandum in Wesley's own handwriting :— "Joan. Westley ad nominat. ducis de Bucks admiss. in fundat. Carthus. 28 Jan. 1713-14.——ad Univ. 24 June, 1720."

1719 Age 16 health,—namely, his invariably carrying out a strict command which his father gave him, to run round the Charterhouse garden three times every morning. It is good for a man "to bear the yoke in his youth," and Wesley learned, as a boy, to suffer wrongfully with a cheerful fortitude, and to submit to the cruel exactions of his elder tyrants without acquiring either the cringing of a slave or a despot's imperious temper.

Wesley entered the school as the poor child of an impoverished parish priest, and had to endure wrongs and insults neither few nor small; but, though he was only sixteen years of age when he left, he had, by his energy of character, his unconquerable patience, his assiduity, and his progress in learning, acquired a high position among his fellows. An old Methodist pamphlet[1] relates an anecdote, to the effect that the Rev. A. Tooke[2] master of the school, was struck with the fact that, though Wesley was remarkably advanced in his studies, yet he constantly associated with the inferior classes, and was accustomed to harangue a number of the smaller boys surrounding him. On one occasion Tooke broke in upon him in the midst of an oration, and interrupted him, by desiring him to follow him into a private room. Wesley reluctantly obeyed, and the master, addressing him, asked how it was that he was so often found among the boys of the lower forms, and sought not the company of the bigger boys, who were his equals? To which the young orator replied, "Better to rule in hell than to serve in heaven."

This story was given by "an old member of society," on what he calls "the most authentic authority," for the purpose of showing that Wesley, even as a boy, was ambitious. Be it so. What then? Is ambition always, and under all circumstances, a thing to be denounced? Ambition is widely different from vanity, a paltry passion of petty minds; neither is it necessarily accompanied with the use of improper means to attain its object. Ambition is common to the human species.

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[1] A Letter to the Rev. T. Coke, LL.D., and Mr. H. Moore, by "An Old Member of Society."

[2] Andrew Tooke was only usher of the school during Wesley's residence. The master was Dr. Thomas Walker. Tooke succeeded to the mastership at Walker's death, in 1728. (See Carlisle's "Concise Description of the Endowed Schools in England.")

There are but few without it, and who are not desirous of distinguishing themselves in the circle in which they live. You see the passion in the aristocratic noble toiling after a distinction which he desires to win ; and you equally see it in the poorest mechanic, who strives to surround himself with poor admirers, and who delights in the superiority which he enjoys over those who are, in some respects, beneath him. Besides, as a rule, a man's ambition is always in correspondence with his other tastes, and faculties, and powers. Dr. Johnson wisely remarks, that "Providence seldom sends any into the world with an inclination to attempt great things, who have not abilities likewise to perform them" ; and Addison, an equally thoughtful student of human nature, observes that "men of the greatest abilities are most fired with ambition ; and, on the contrary, mean and narrow minds are the least actuated by it." To account for this may be difficult, but none will deny its truth. Perhaps the difference may be occasioned by a man's consciousness of his own capacities making him despair of attaining positions which others reach ; or perhaps, which is more likely still, Providence, in the very framing of his mind, has freed him from a passion, which would be useless to the world, and a torment to himself. 1719 Age 16

On such grounds, then, we are quite prepared to argue that, even allowing the above anonymous story to be strictly true, and allowing also that it proves that Wesley as a boy was animated with ambition, there is nothing in it which, for a moment, detracts from Wesley's honour and honest fame.

We wish that this were the only thing to be alleged against him during his Charterhouse career. Unfortunately there is another fact far more serious ; for Wesley, while at this seat of learning, lost the religion which had marked his character from the days of infancy. He writes concerning this period of his history : "Outward restraints being removed, I was much more negligent than before, even of outward duties, and almost continually guilty of outward sins, which I knew to be such, though they were not scandalous in the eye of the world. However, I still read the Scriptures, and said my prayers morning and evening. And what I now hoped to be saved by was, 1. Not being so bad as other people. 2. Having

1719 Age 16 still a kindness for religion. And, 3. Reading the Bible, going to church, and saying my prayers."[1]

Terrible is the danger when a child leaves a pious home for a public school. John Wesley entered the Charterhouse a saint, and left it a sinner.

It was during his residence at this celebrated school, that the mysterious and preternatural voices were heard in his father's house. The often told story need not be repeated; but there can be no question that its influence upon himself was powerful and important. He took the trouble of obtaining minute particulars from his mother, from his four sisters, Emily, Mary, Susannah, and Anne, and from Robin Brown. He likewise transcribed his father's diary, containing an account of the disturbances;[2] thereby showing the intense interest he felt in the affair. In fact, it would seem that, from this period, Wesley was a firm believer in ghosts and apparitions. In his twentieth year, we find him writing to his mother, in the gravest manner possible, concerning what he calls "one of the most unaccountable stories he had ever heard;"—namely, that of a lad in Ireland, who ever and anon made an involuntary pilgrimage through the aerial regions, and feasted with demigods *in nubibus*. In the same letter, Wesley relates an adventure of his own; for, while walking a few days previously in the neighbourhood of Oxford, he had observed a forlorn looking house, which he found was unoccupied by mortals because it was haunted by ghosts. Wesley tells his mother that he purposes to visit this forsaken dwelling, and to assure himself whether what he had heard was true. He further relates that a Mr. Barnesley, and two other of his fellow-students, had recently seen an apparition in a field adjoining Oxford, and that it had since been ascertained that Barnesley's mother died in Ireland at the very moment when the spectre had been witnessed.[3]

Thus, at this early period of his history, Wesley's mind, wisely or unwisely, superstitiously or otherwise, was full of the supernatural; and to the calm judgment of his philosophic

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. i., p. 92.
[2] Letters published by Priestley.
[3] Original letters in *Wesleyan Times*, 1866.

mother he submits his facts for her opinion. Three weeks afterwards she wrote: [1]— 1719 Age 16

"DEAR JACKY,—The story of Mr. Barnesley has afforded me many curious speculations. I do not doubt the fact; but I cannot understand why these apparitions are permitted. If they were allowed to speak to us, and we had strength to bear such converse,—if they had commission to inform us of anything relating to their invisible world that would be of any use to us in this,—if they would instruct us how to avoid danger, or put us in a way of being wiser and better, there would be sense in it; but to appear for no end that we know of, unless to frighten people almost out of their wits, seems altogether unreasonable."

This was not a solution of Wesley's difficulty. It was rather making mystery more mysterious. The young student was full of anxious inquiry. Isaac Taylor thinks that the strange Epworth episode so laid open Wesley's faculty of belief, that ever after a right of way for the supernatural was opened through his mind; and, to the end of life, there was nothing so marvellous that it could not freely pass where "Old Jeffrey" had passed before it. Taylor adds: "Wesley's most prominent infirmity was his wonder-loving credulity; from the beginning to the end of his course this weakness ruled him." Other opportunities will occur of testing the truthfulness of Taylor's statement; but here it may be observed, that for young Wesley to have regarded the noises at Epworth with indifference would have been irreligious and irrational. A metapysician, vain of his philosophic powers, like Isaac Taylor, may "deal with occult folk, such as Jeffrey, huffingly and disrespectfully"; and may pretend to "catch in the Epworth ghost a glimpse of an idiotic creature" belonging to some order of invisible beings "not more intelligent than apes or pigs," and which, by some "mischance, was thrown over its boundary, and obtained leave to disport itself among things palpable, and went to the extent of its tether in freaks of bootless mischief"; but, in broaching such a theory, Isaac Taylor, wishing to be witty, makes himself ridiculous. John Wesley believed the noises to be supernatural; and Southey, as great an authority as Taylor, defends his belief; and argues that such occurrences have a tendency to explode the fine-spun theories of men who deny

[1] Manuscript letter.

1720 Age 17

another state of being, and to bring them to the conclusion that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in their philosophy. We have little doubt that the Epworth noises deepened and most powerfully increased Wesley's convictions of the existence of an unseen world; and, in this way, exercised an important influence on the whole of his future life. His notion,[1] that the disturbance was occasioned by a messenger of Satan, sent to buffet his father for a rash vow alleged to have been made fifteen years before, has been shown to be utterly unfounded;[2] but the impressions it produced, or rather strengthened, respecting invisible realities, were of the utmost consequence in moulding his character, and in making him one of the most earnest preachers of the Christian creed that ever lived.

During Wesley's residence at the Charterhouse, his brother Samuel was the head usher of Westminster School; and in 1719, Wesley seems, for a time, to have become his brother's guest. Charles was now a pupil under Samuel's tuition; and the latter, writing to his father, says: "My brother Jack, I can faithfully assure you, gives you no manner of discouragement from breeding your third son a scholar. Jack is a brave boy, learning Hebrew as fast as he can."[3]

In the following year, Wesley was elected to Christ Church, Oxford, one of the noblest colleges in that illustrious seat of learning, and here he continued until after his ordination in 1725. In reference to this period, he writes: "I still said my prayers, both in public and private; and read, with the Scriptures, several other books of religion, especially comments on the New Testament. Yet I had not all this while so much as a notion of inward holiness; nay, went on habitually and, for the most part, very contentedly, in some or other known sin; though with some intermission and short struggles, especially before and after the holy communion, which I was obliged to receive thrice a year."[4]

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1784, p. 606.
[2] See "Life and Times of Rev. S. Wesley," p. 251.
[3] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 117.
[4] A story is told by the Rev. John Reynolds, in his "Anecdotes of Wesley," p. 8, to the effect that Wesley was deeply moved while at Oxford, by an odd interview which he had with the porter of his college. This man late one evening went to the young collegian's room, and said

Such was Wesley during the first five years he spent at Oxford. He maintained the reputation for scholarship which he had acquired at school; but there was no alteration in his moral and religious character. He said his prayers and read good books, as perhaps most Oxford students did; but, like others, he lived in sin, even habitually, except about thrice a year, when he was compelled to receive the sacrament. No doubt, like all the Wesley family, he was a gay and sprightly companion, and full of wit and humour. He began to amuse himself occasionally with writing verses, a specimen of which is given by Dr. Whitehead and is reproduced by Joseph Nightingale. The verses are six in number, and are merely the translation of a Latin poem respecting a young lady to whom he gives the name of Cloe. As Juno had a favourite peacock and Venus a favourite dove, so Cloe had a favourite flea, whose bliss in being allowed to crawl over the young lady's person the poet makes it his business to describe. Henry Moore is angry with Dr. Whitehead for having given the verses publicity; but certainly without a cause. Had the piece been written by Wesley in advanced life it might have deserved censure; but being written when he was scarcely beyond his teens, it is only what a smart young fellow, full of vivacity, might be expected to produce. 1723 Age 20

When Wesley went to Oxford his health was far from being vigorous and robust. He was frequently troubled with bleeding at the nose. In a letter to his mother, in 1723, he tells her that lately, while walking in the country, he had bled so violently that he was almost choked, nor could he at all

he wished to talk with him. After a little pleasantry, Wesley told him to go home and get another coat. The porter replied, "This is the only coat I have in the world, and I thank God for it." Wesley said, "Go home, and get your supper." The man responded, "I have had nothing to-day but a drink of water, and I thank God for that." Wesley remarked, "It is late, and you will be locked out, and then what will you have to thank God for?" "I will thank Him," replied the porter, "that I have the dry stones to lie upon." "John," said Wesley, "you thank God when you have nothing to wear, nothing to eat, and no bed to lie upon. What else do you thank Him for?" "I thank Him," returned the poor fellow, "that He has given me life and being; and a heart to love Him, and a desire to serve Him." Reynolds says this was related by Wesley himself, and that the interview made a lasting impression on Wesley's mind, and convinced him there was something in religion to which he was as yet a stranger.

1724 abate the hæmorrhage till he stripped himself and leaped into
Age 21 the river.

He also had to struggle with financial difficulty, and was not unfrequently in debt. He sometimes had to borrow; and, more than once, when requesting that his sisters would write to him, playfully remarks, that, though he was "so poor, he would be able to spare the postage for a letter now and then." His friends were kind to him, and his tutors were considerate. Soon after his entrance, his tutor, Mr. Wigan, retired to one of his country livings, and was succeeded by Mr. Sherman, who kindly told him that he would make his fees as low as possible.[1] Of course he had the £40 per annum, which belonged to him as a Charterhouse scholar; but this, with the utmost economy, was hardly sufficient to meet all the expenses of a young Oxford student. These financial embarrassments are often referred to in the subsequent correspondence.

The following is from an unpublished letter, written by his mother.

"WROOTE, *August* 19, 1724.

"DEAR JACK,—I am uneasy because I have not heard from you. I think you don't do well to stand upon points, and to write only letter for letter. Let me hear from you often, and inform me of the state of your health, and whether you have any reasonable hopes of being out of debt. I am most concerned for the good, generous man that lent you ten pounds, and am ashamed to beg a month or two longer, since he has been so kind as to grant us so much time already. We were amused with your uncle's coming from India; but I suppose these fancies are laid aside. I wish there had been anything in it, for then perhaps it would have been in my power to have provided for you. But if all things fail, I hope God will not forsake us. We have still His good providence to depend on, which has a thousand expedients to relieve us beyond our view.

"Dear Jack, be not discouraged; do your duty; keep close to your studies, and hope for better days. Perhaps, notwithstanding all, we shall pick up a few crumbs for you before the end of the year.

"Dear Jacky, I beseech Almighty God to bless thee!

"SUSANNAH WESLEY."

The following also, from another unpublished letter by his mother, refers to the same subject.

[1] *Wesleyan Times*, Jan. 29, 1866.

"WROOTE, *September* 10, 1724. 1724 Age 21

"DEAR JACKY,—I am nothing glad that Mr. —— has paid himself out of your exhibition; for though I cannot hope, I do not despair, of my brother's coming, or, at least, remembering me where he is.

"The small-pox has been very mortal at Epworth most of this summer. Our family have all had it except me, and I hope God will preserve me from it.

"I heartily wish you were in orders, and could come and serve as one of your father's curates. Then I should see you often, and could be more helpful to you than it is possible to be at this distance."

We subjoin an extract from another letter, written shortly after the above, and for the first time published in the *Wesleyan Times* of January 29, 1866.

JOHN WESLEY TO HIS MOTHER.

"OXON, *November* 1, 1724.

"DEAR MOTHER,—We are most of us now very healthy at Oxford, which may be in some measure owing to the frosty weather we have had lately. Fruit is so very cheap that apples may be had almost for fetching; and other things are both plentiful and good. We have, indeed, something bad as well as good, for a great many rogues are about the town, insomuch that it is exceedingly unsafe to be out late at night. A gentleman of my acquaintance, standing at the door of a coffee-house about seven in the evening, had no sooner turned about, but his cap and wig were snatched off his head, and, though he followed the thief a great distance, he was unable to recover them. I am pretty safe from such gentlemen; for unless they carried me away, carcass and all, they would have but a poor purchase.

"The chief piece of news with us is concerning the famous Jack Sheppard's escape from Newgate, which is indeed as surprising as most stories I have heard.

"I suppose you have seen the famous Dr. Cheyne's 'Book of Health and Long Life,' which is, as he says he expected, very much cried down by the physicians. He refers almost everything to temperance and exercise, and supports most things with physical reasons. He entirely condemns eating anything salt or high-seasoned, as also pork, fish, and stall-fed cattle; and recommends for drink two pints of water and one of wine in twenty-four hours, with eight ounces of animal, and twelve of vegetable food in the same time. The book is chiefly directed to studious and sedentary persons.

"I should have writ before now had I not had an unlucky cut across my thumb, which almost jointed it, but is now nearly cured. I should be exceedingly glad to keep a correspondence with my sister Emily if she were willing, for I believe I have not heard from her since I have been at Oxford. I have writ once or twice to my sister Sukey too, but have not had an answer either from her or my sister Hetty, from whom I have

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more than once desired the Poem of the Dog. I should be glad to hear how things go on at Wroote, which I now remember with more pleasure than Epworth; so true it is, at least in me, that the persons, not the place, make home so pleasant.

"The scantiness of my paper obliges me to conclude with begging yours and my father's blessing on

"Your dutiful son,

"For Mrs. Wesley, at Wroote, "JOHN WESLEY."

"To be left at the Post-office, in Bawtry, Nottinghamshire."

Dr. Cheyne, mentioned in the preceding letter, was educated at Edinburgh, where his habits were temperate and sedentary; but, proceeding to London, he associated with a number of young gentry, to retain whose friendship it was necessary to indulge to the utmost in table luxuries. The result was, Cheyne became nervous, scorbutic, short-breathed, lethargic and listless; and was so enormously fat as to be nearly thirty-three stones in weight. His life became an intolerable burden, and, to cure himself, he adopted a milk and vegetable diet, by means of which he recovered his strength, activity, and cheerfulness. He became the author of several interesting works, one of which was the book just noticed. Wesley, to a great extent, adopted Cheyne's prescription, and forty-six years after he read his book at Oxford, wrote: "How marvellous are the ways of God! How has He kept me even from a child! From ten to thirteen or fourteen, I had little but bread to eat, and not great plenty of even that. I believe this was so far from hurting me, that it laid the foundation of lasting health. When I grew up, in consequence of reading Dr. Cheyne, I chose to eat sparingly, and to drink water. This was another great means of continuing my health, till I was about seven-and-twenty. I then began spitting of blood, which continued several years. A warm climate [Georgia] cured this. I was afterwards brought to the brink of death by a fever; but it left me healthier than before. Eleven years after, I was in the third stage of a consumption; in three months it pleased God to remove this also. Since that I have known neither pain nor sickness, and am now healthier than I was forty years ago."[1] Cheyne became one of Wesley's favourites, and no wonder. After reading his "Natural

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. iii., p. 382.

Method of Curing Diseases," he designates it one of the most ingenious books he had ever seen; but adds, "What epicure will ever regard it? for the man talks against good eating and drinking!"[1] Cheyne died in 1745, calmly giving up his soul to God, says Wesley, without any struggle, either of body or mind. 1724 Age 21.

Except the statement, that his *carcass* was the only property he had, Wesley makes not the least allusion, in the foregoing letter, to his pecuniary embarrassments. Naturally enough, his mother was more anxious than himself. Hence the following letter, hitherto unpublished, written within a month afterwards.

"WROOTE, *November* 24, 1724.

"DEAR JACKY,—I have now three of your letters before me unanswered. I take it very kindly that you write so often. I am afraid of being chargeable, or I should miss few posts, it being exceeding pleasant to me, in this solitude, to read your letters, which, however, would be pleasing anywhere.

"Your disappointment, in not seeing us at Oxon, was not of such consequence as mine in not meeting my brother in London; not but your wonderful curiosities might excite a person of greater faith than mine to travel to your museum to visit them. It is almost a pity that somebody does not cut the wezand of that keeper to cure his lying so enormously.

"I wish you would save all the money you can conveniently spare, not to spend on a visit, but for a wiser and better purpose,—to pay debts, and make yourself easy. I am not without hope of meeting you next summer, if it please God to prolong my mortal life. If you then be willing, and have time allowed you to accompany me to Wroote, I will bear your charges, as God shall enable me.

"I hope, at your leisure, you will oblige me with some more verses on any, but rather on a religious subject.

"Dear Jack, I beseech Almighty God to bless you.

"SUSANNAH WESLEY."

Mrs. Wesley's brother, referred to in the foregoing letter, was in the service of the East India Company; and, the public prints having stated that he was returning to England in one of the company's ships, Mrs. Wesley proceeded to London to await his arrival, and to welcome him. The information, however, was untrue, and both she and her son John were doomed to a disappointment. Samuel, at the time, had a broken leg, and had invited John to meet his mother at West-

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. i., p. 341.

1725 Age 22 minster. John jocosely congratulates Samuel, that, like the Dutch seaman who broke his leg by a fall from the main-mast of his ship, he might thank God that he had not broken his neck also; and then he adds that his mother's letter had made him weep for joy, for the two things he most wished for of almost anything in the world, were again to see his mother, and to see Westminster.[1]

Wesley was still in debt, a fact which gave his mother great anxiety. His father also, as usual, was embarrassed, and yet, though offended at his son's want of thrift, did his utmost to afford him help. The following are painfully interesting letters, and one of them is now for the first time published :—

"*January* 5, 1725.

"DEAR SON,—Your brother will receive £5 for you next Saturday, if Mr. S—— is paid the £10 he lent you; if not, I must go to H——, but I promise you I shan't forget that you are my son, if you do not that I am

"Your loving father,

"SAMUEL WESLEY."

"WROOTE, *January* 26, 1725.

"DEAR SON,—I am so well pleased with your decent behaviour, or, at least, with your letters, that I hope I shall have no occasion to remember any more some things that are past; and since you have now for some time bit upon the bridle, I will take care hereafter to put a little honey upon it, as oft as I am able; but then it shall be of my own mere motion, as the last £5 was, for I will bear no rivals in my kingdom.

"Your affectionate father,

"SAMUEL WESLEY."[2]

Some will blame the writer for publishing such letters, on the ground that they cast shadows on young Wesley's character; but it ought to be borne in mind that the work of a biographer is not to hide facts, but to publish them. Why such an unwillingness to look at the specks as well as sunshine in John Wesley's history? Is it necessary, in order to establish the high position which has been assigned to Wesley, that the reader should be made to think that from first to last he was *sui generis*, and altogether free from the infirmities, faults, and sins of ordinary men? If it were, we would rather lower the position than pervert the facts; but we

[1] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 118.
[2] "Life and Times of S. Wesley," p. 390.

maintain, that no such necessity exists. When we say, that from the age of eleven to the age of twenty-two, Wesley made no pretensions to be religious, and, except on rare occasions, habitually lived in the practice of known sin, we only say what is equally true of many of the greatest, wisest, and most godly men that have ever lived. The fact is humiliating, and ought to be deplored; but why hide it in one case more than in another? Wesley soon became one of the holiest and most useful men living; but, except the first ten years of his childhood, he was up to the age of twenty-two, by his own confession, an habitual, if not profane and flagrant sinner; and to his sin, he added the inconvenient and harassing infirmity of his honest but imprudent father, and thoughtlessly contracted debts greater than he had means to pay. His letters are without religious sentiments, and his life was without a religious aim. We yield to no man living in our high veneration of Wesley's character; but, at the same time, we cannot hide it from ourselves and others, that, being human, he was frail, and, like all his fellows, had need to repent as in dust and ashes, and to seek, through Christ, the forgiveness of his sins and a change of heart.

But leaving this, we turn to another important matter. There is no evidence to show, that, when Wesley went to Oxford, he intended or wished to become a minister of the Established Church; it might be so, but it might be otherwise. It is true that, by obtaining ordination, he would become entitled to one of the Church livings at the disposal of the Charterhouse governors; but Wesley was far too noble and too high principled to seek admission into so sacred an office as the Christian ministry merely to secure for himself a crust of bread. He might intend to devote himself, like his brother Samuel, to tutorship; or he might contemplate some other mode of maintenance. Certain it is, that it was not until about the beginning of 1725, when he had been more than four years at college, that he expressed a wish to become a minister of Christ. The matter was properly submitted to his parents, and both gave him the best advice they could.

His father told him that his principal motive for entering the ministry must be, not, "as Eli's sons, to eat a piece of

1725 Age 22 bread," but the glory of God, and the good of men; and that, as a qualification for its sacred functions, he ought to have a thorough knowledge of the Holy Scriptures in their original languages. He was, however, not in haste for his going into orders, and would give him further advice at some future time.

On February 23, 1725 his mother wrote to him as follows :—

"DEAR JACKY,—The alteration of your temper has occasioned me much speculation. I, who am apt to be sanguine, hope it may proceed from the operations of God's Holy Spirit, that by taking away your relish of sensual enjoyments, He may prepare and dispose your mind for a more serious and close application to things of a more sublime and spiritual nature. If it be so, happy are you if you cherish those dispositions, and now, in good earnest, resolve to make religion the business of your life; for, after all, that is the one thing that strictly speaking is necessary, and all things else are comparatively little to the purposes of life. I heartily wish you would now enter upon a serious examination of yourself, that you may know whether you have a reasonable hope of salvation; that is, whether you are in a state of faith and repentance or not, which you know are the conditions of the gospel covenant on our part. If you are, the satisfaction of knowing it would abundantly reward your pains; if not, you will find a more reasonable occasion for tears than can be met with in a tragedy.

"Now I mention this, it calls to mind your letter to your father about taking orders. I was much pleased with it, and liked the proposal well; but it is an unhappiness almost peculiar to our family, that your father and I seldom think alike. I approve the disposition of your mind, and think the sooner you are a deacon the better; because it may be an inducement to greater application in the study of practical divinity, which I humbly conceive is the best study for candidates for orders. Mr. Wesley differs from me, and would engage you, I believe, in critical learning, which, though accidentally of use, is in nowise preferable to the other. I earnestly pray God to avert that great evil from you of engaging in trifling studies to the neglect of such as are absolutely necessary. I dare advise nothing: God Almighty direct and bless you! I have much to say, but cannot write you more at present. I long to see you. We hear nothing of H—— which gives us some uneasiness. We have all writ, but can get no answer. I wish all be well—Adieu!

"SUSANNAH WESLEY."[1]

Three weeks after this, his father wrote to him, saying that he was now inclined to his entering orders without delay, and

[1] Only a part of this letter has been heretofore published.

exhorting him to prayer and study in reference to such a step, promising that he would struggle hard to obtain the money for the needful expenses. 1725 Age 22.

Meanwhile, his sister Emilia wrote him a long letter, from which the following extracts are taken :—

"WROOTE, *April* 7, 1725.

"DEAR BROTHER,—Whether you will be engaged before thirty, or not, I cannot determine; but, if my advice be worth listening to, never engage your affections before your worldly affairs are in such a posture that you may marry soon. The contrary practice has proved very pernicious in our family. I know you are a young man encompassed with difficulties, and have passed through many hardships already, and probably must through many more before you are easy in the world ; but, believe me, if ever you come to suffer the torment of a hopeless love, all other afflictions will seem small in comparison of this.

"I know not when we have had so good a year, both at Wroote and at Epworth, as this year; but instead of saving anything to clothe my sister or myself, we are just where we were. A noble crop has almost all gone, beside Epworth living, to pay some part of those infinite debts my father has run into, which are so many, that were he to save £50 a year, he would not be clear in the world this seven years. One thing I warn you of : let not my giving you this account be any hindrance to your affairs. If you want assistance in any case, my father is as able to give it now as any time these last ten years ; nor shall we be ever the poorer for it.

"I have quite tired you now ; pray be faithful to me. Let me have one relation that I can trust, Never give a hint to any one of aught I write to you ; and continue to love your unhappy but affectionate sister,

"EMILIA WESLEY."[1]

Wesley now began to apply himself with diligence to the study of divinity. He writes : "When I was about twenty-two, my father pressed me to enter into holy orders. At the same time the providence of God directing me to Kempis's 'Christian's Pattern,' I began to see that true religion was seated in the heart, and that God's law extended to all our thoughts as well as words and actions. I was, however, angry at Kempis for being too strict ; though I read him only in Dean Stanhope's translation. Yet I had frequently much sensible comfort in reading him, such as I was an utter stranger to before. Meeting likewise with a religious friend, which I never had till now, I began to alter the whole form of my conversation, and to set in earnest upon a new life. I set

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1845, p. 359.

1725 Age 22 apart an hour or two a day for religious retirement. I communicated every week. I watched against all sin, whether in word or deed. I began to aim at, and to pray for, inward holiness. So that now, doing so much and living so good a life, I doubted not that I was a good Christian."[1]

What a confession! It was eleven years since Wesley left the parental roof; but he never had a *religious friend* till now. No wonder he had gone astray.

Having written to his mother, stating some of the difficulties which he had found in Kempis, she, on the 8th June, 1725, sent him a long letter, which, however adapted to an enlightened Christian, was useless, if not misleading, to an anxious inquirer not yet converted. The entire letter is before us, containing, besides a large amount of Christian casuistry, some family affairs of painful interest. These we pass over, and merely give an extract in reference to Kempis:—

"I have Kempis by me; but have not read him lately. I cannot recollect the passages you mention; but, believing you do him justice, I do positively aver that he is extremely in the wrong in that impious, I was about to say blasphemous, suggestion, that God, by an irreversible decree, has determined any man to be miserable even in this world. His intentions, as Himself, are holy, just, and good; and all the miseries incident to men here or hereafter proceed from themselves. I take Kempis to have been an honest weak man, that had more zeal than knowledge.

"Your brother has brought us a heavy reckoning for you and Charles. God be merciful to us all! Dear Jack, I earnestly beseech Almighty God to bless you. Adieu!

"SUSANNAH WESLEY."

Ten days after the date of his mother's letter, he wrote to her again, as follows:—

"*June* 18, 1725.

"You have so well satisfied me as to the tenets of Thomas à Kempis, that I have ventured to trouble you again on a more dubious subject. Dr. Taylor, in his 'Holy Living and Dying,' says, 'Whether God has forgiven us or no, we know not; therefore, be sorrowful for ever having sinned.' This seems to contradict his own words in the next section, where he says that, 'by the Lord's supper all the members are united to one another, and to Christ the Head. The Holy Ghost confers on us the graces necessary for, and our souls receive the seed of, an immortal life.' Now

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. i., p. 93.

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surely these graces are of not so little force as that we cannot perceive whether we have them or not. If we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us (which He will not do unless we are regenerate), certainly we must be sensible of it. If we can never have any certainty of our being in a state of salvation, good reason it is that every moment should be spent, not in joy, but in fear and trembling; and then, undoubtedly, in this life we are of all men the most miserable. God deliver us from such a fearful expectation as this!"[1]

We thus find young Wesley carefully reading Thomas à Kempis and Jeremy Taylor, and groping after two of the great doctrines which afterwards distinguished his ministry: God's love to *all*, and the privilege of living in a state of conscious salvation. These and other topics puzzled him, and yet he seemed to have an almost instinctive knowledge of what is truth. We have seen his mother's sentiments concerning Kempis. His father, on the 14th of July following, observes that though Kempis has gone to an extreme in teaching the doctrine of self-mortification, yet, considering the age in which he wrote, there was no need to be surprised at this. And then he adds: "Making some grains of allowance, he may be read to great advantage. Notwithstanding all his superstition and enthusiasm, it is almost impossible to peruse him seriously, without admiring, and in some measure imitating, his heroic strains of humility and piety and devotion."

The books of Kempis and Taylor seem to have been the first on practical divinity that Wesley read, and, to the day of his death, were held in high esteem. Kempis's "Pattern" was one of the first books that Wesley published; and an extract from Taylor's work forms a part of his "Christian Library." In his estimation, Taylor was a man of the sublimest piety, and one of the greatest geniuses on earth;[2] and Kempis is always spoken of in terms of high respect. What were the results of Wesley's reading?

1. To this incident we are indebted for Wesley's long continued record of the events and exercises of his daily life. In the preface to his first journal, dated September 20, 1740, he states, that about fifteen years ago (1725), in pur-

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 8. [2] Ibid. vol. vi., p. 425.

1725 Age 22 suance of an advice given by Bishop Taylor in his "Rules for Holy Living and Dying," he began to take a more exact account than he had done before of the manner wherein he spent his time, writing down how he had employed every hour. The practice thus begun was uninterruptedly continued until his death, and issued in giving to the world one of the most interesting works in the English language; a work not only containing the best history of the great reformer, and of the rise and growth of the Methodist movement, but sparkling with the most racy remarks respecting men, books, places, science, witches, ghosts, and almost everything with which the writer came in contact.

2. Another, and far more important result of reading Kempis and Taylor, was an entire change of life. He writes respecting Kempis's "Pattern:" "When I met with it in 1726,[1] the nature and extent of inward religion, the religion of the heart, now appeared to me in a stronger light than ever it had done before. I saw that giving even all my life to God (supposing it possible to do this, and go no further) would profit me nothing, unless I gave my heart, yea, all my heart, to Him. I saw that simplicity of intention, and purity of affection, one design in all we speak and do, and one desire ruling all our tempers, are indeed the wings of the soul, without which she can never ascend to God. I sought after this from that hour."[2]

Again, in reference to Taylor's "Holy Living and Dying," he observes: "In reading several parts of this book, I was exceedingly affected; that part in particular which relates to purity of intention. Instantly I resolved to dedicate all my life to God,—all my thoughts, and words, and actions,—being thoroughly convinced there was no medium; but that every part of my life (not some only) must either be a sacrifice to God, or myself, that is, in effect, the devil."[3]

Here, then, we have the turning-point in Wesley's history. It was not until thirteen years after this, that he received the consciousness of being saved through faith in Christ; but

[1] A mistake for 1725.
[2] Wesley's Works, vol. iii., p. 202, and vol. xi., p. 351.
[3] Wesley's Works, vol. xi., p. 351.

from this time, his whole aim was to serve God and his fellow-men, and to get safe to heaven. No man could be more sincere, earnest, devout, diligent, and self-denying; and yet, during this lengthened period, he lived and laboured in a mist. 1725 Age 22

His father was £350 in debt; but was now resolved to do his utmost to obtain ordination for his son. He urged him to master St. Chrysostom and the articles; and sent his "Letter to a Curate," in manuscript, to assist him in his preparations; and also wrote to the Bishop of Lincoln in his favour.[1] Meanwhile his mother tried to solve some of his scruples respecting the article on predestination;[2] and wrote him a long letter, not hitherto published, from which we give the following extracts:—

"WROOTE, *July* 21, 1725.

"DEAR JACKEY,—Though I have a great deal of unpleasant business, am infirm, and but slow of understanding, yet it is a pleasure to me to correspond with you on religious subjects; and, if it be of the least advantage to you, I shall greatly rejoice. I know little or nothing of Dr. Taylor's 'Holy Living and Dying,' having not seen it for above twenty years; but I think it is generally well esteemed. I cannot judge of the rules you suppose impracticable; but I will tell you my thoughts of humility as briefly as I can."

Here follow her remarks on humility. She continues:—

"He is certainly right, that there is but one true repentance, for repentance is a state not a transient act; and this state begins in a change to the whole mind from evil to good, and contains, in some sense, all the parts of a holy life.[3] Repentance, in Scripture, is said to signify the whole of obedience, as faith often includes repentance, and all the subsequent acts of religion: 'Repent, and thy sins shall be forgiven thee;' 'Believe, and thou shalt be saved.' If, after this change, we fall into the contrary state—a state of wilful impenitence—which is nothing less than a total apostasy—the Scripture is plain; 'There remaineth no more sacrifice for sin;' no place is left for repentance; for, by this formal renunciation of our most holy faith, we 'crucify afresh the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.' But this is not the case of those who never were converted; or of such who, having been converted, fall nevertheless sometimes into their old sins, through the fault of their nature, or the stress of temptation.

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[1] See "Life and Times of S. Wesley," p. 394.

[2] See letter dated July 18, 1725, in *Wesleyan Times* of April 23, 1866.

[3] Mrs. Wesley here seems to use the word "repentance" in the sense of regeneration.

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"I don't well understand what he means by saying, 'Whether God has forgiven us or no, we know not.' If he intends such a certainty of pardon as cannot possibly admit of the least doubt or scruple, he is infallibly in the right; for such an absolute certainty we can never have till we come to heaven. But if he means no more than that reasonable persuasion of the forgiveness of sins, which a true penitent feels when he reflects on the evidences of his own sincerity, he is certainly in the wrong, for such a firm persuasion is actually enjoyed by man in this life.

"The virtues which we have by the grace of God acquired, are not of so little force as he supposes; for we may surely perceive when we have them in any good degree. But when our love to God, and faith in the Lord Jesus are weak (for there is a great inequality in our lives); when, though we strive against our sins, we have not so far overcome but that we sometimes relapse into them again,—in such a case we shall be often doubtful of our state. But when, by the assistance of the Holy Spirit, we have made a considerable progress in religion, and when habits of virtue are confirmed; when we find little disturbance from any exorbitant appetite, and can maintain an even tenour of life,—we shall be easy, and free from all torment, doubts, or fears of our future happiness; for perfect love will cast out fears.

"I am entirely of your opinion, that whenever we worthily communicate, with faith, humility, etc., our sins are forgiven, and will never rise in judgment against us if we forsake them. The Scripture is so clear and express in this case, that I think none can question the pardon of his sins if he repent, except such as do not believe it.

"But if you would be free from fears and doubts concerning your future happiness, every morning and evening commit your soul to Jesus Christ, in a full faith in His power and will to save you. If you do this seriously and constantly, He will take you under His conduct; He will guide you by His Holy Spirit into the way of truth, and give you strength to walk in it. He will dispose of the events of God's general providence to your spiritual advantage; and if, to keep you humble and more sensible of your dependence on Him, He permit you to fall into lesser sins, be not discouraged; for He will certainly give you repentance, and safely guide you through all the temptations of this world, and, at the last, receive you to Himself in glory.

"Your father has written lately to you about your business. I heartily wish you success, for I am greatly troubled at your unhappy circumstances. I can do nothing at present but pray for you. Dear Jack, I beseech Almighty God to bless you.

"SUSANNAH WESLEY."

Part of Wesley's reply to his mother's letter is as follows:—

"*July* 29, 1725.

"That we can never be so certain of the pardon of our sins as to be assured they will never rise up against us, I firmly believe. We know that they will infallibly do so if ever we apostatize, and I am not

satisfied what evidence there can be of our final perseverance, till we have finished our course. But I am persuaded we may know if we are now in a state of salvation, since that is expressly promised in the Holy Scriptures to our sincere endeavours, and we are, surely, able to judge of our own sincerity.

1725, Age 22

"What shall I say of predestination? An everlasting purpose of God to deliver some from damnation, does, I suppose, exclude all from that deliverance who are not chosen. And if it was inevitably decreed from eternity that such a determinate part of mankind should be saved, and none beside them, a vast majority of the world were only born to eternal death, without so much as a possibility of avoiding it. How is this consistent with either the Divine justice or mercy? Is it merciful to ordain a creature to everlasting misery? Is it just to punish man for crimes which he could not but commit? That God should be the author of sin and injustice (which must, I think, be the consequence of maintaining this opinion), is a contradiction to the clearest ideas we have of the Divine nature and perfections."[1]

If the ideas of Wesley and his mother, on the way of attaining salvation, had been as scriptural as his ideas on general redemption, both would have been in a holier and happier frame of mind.

Wesley's religion already made him the subject of contemptuous sneers. Hence the following from his father:—

"WROOTE, *August* 2, 1725.

"DEAR SON,—If you be what you write I shall be happy. As to the gentlemen candidates you mention, does anybody think the devil is dead, or asleep, or that he has no agents left? Surely virtue can bear being laughed at. The Captain and Master endured something more for us before He entered into glory, and unless we track His steps, in vain do we hope to share that glory with Him.

"Nought else but blessing from your loving father,

"SAMUEL WESLEY."

Wesley was still in doubt in reference to several matters which had occurred to him during his late religious reading; and to relieve his doubts, his mother sent him some of the ablest letters she ever penned. The subjoined is taken from a long epistle now before us, and only part of which has heretofore been published:—

"WROOTE, *August* 18, 1725.

"DEAR JACKEY,—Divine faith is an assent to whatever God has revealed to us, because He has revealed it. And this is that virtue of faith

[1] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 129.

1725 Age 22

which is one of the two conditions of our salvation by Jesus Christ. But this matter is so fully and accurately explained by Bishop Pearson (under 'I Believe') that I shall say no more of it.

("I have often wondered that men should be so vain as to amuse themselves with searching into the decrees of God, which no human wit can fathom, and do not rather employ their time and powers in working out their salvation.) Such studies tend more to confound than to inform the understanding, and young people had better let them alone. But since I find you have some scruples concerning our article, Of Predestination, I will tell you my thoughts of the matter. If they satisfy not, you may desire your father's direction, who is surely better qualified for a casuist than I.

("The doctrine of predestination, as maintained by the rigid Calvinists, is very shocking, and ought to be abhorred, because it directly charges the most high God with being the author of sin. I think you reason well and justly against it; for it is certainly inconsistent with the justice and goodness of God to lay any man under either a physical or moral necessity of committing sin, and then to punish him for doing it.

"I firmly believe that God, from eternity, has elected some to eternal life; but then I humbly conceive that this election is founded on His foreknowledge, according to Romans viii. 29, 30. Whom, in His eternal prescience, God saw would make a right use of their powers, and accept of offered mercy, He did predestinate and adopt for His children. And that they may be conformed to the image of His only Son, He calls them to Himself, through the preaching of the gospel, and, internally, by His Holy Spirit; which call they obeying, repenting of their sins and believing in the Lord Jesus, He justifies them, absolves them from the guilt of all their sins, and acknowledges them as just and righteous persons, through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ. And having thus justified, He receives them to glory—to heaven.

"This is the sum of what I believe concerning predestination, which I think is agreeable to the analogy of faith; since it does in nowise derogate from the glory of God's free grace, nor impair the liberty of man. Nor can it with more reason be supposed that the prescience of God is the cause that so many finally perish, than that one knowing the sun will rise to-morrow is the cause of its rising.")

John Wesley substantially adopted his mother's predestinarian views, as may be seen in his sermon on the text which she expounds in the foregoing letter; but his notions of that faith by which a sinner is justified were, at present, like those of his mother, vague and general, and far from being clear.

The time for Wesley's ordination was now approaching, and the money question again rose up like a spectre, and required attention. His father writes:—

"BAWTRY, *September* 1, 1725. 1725 — Age 22

"DEAR SON,—I came hither to-day because I cannot be at rest till I make you easier. I could not possibly manufacture any money for you here sooner than next Saturday. On Monday I design to wait on Dr. Morley, and will try to prevail with your brother to return you £8, with interest. I will assist you in the charges for ordination, though I am myself just now struggling for life. This £8 you may depend on the next week, or the week after.

"Your affectionate father,

"SAMUEL WESLEY."[1]

Difficulties were overcome, and Wesley, having prepared himself with the most conscientious care for the ministerial office, was ordained deacon on Sunday, September 19th, 1725.

[1] "Life and Times of S. Wesley," p. 395.

CHAPTER II.

WESLEY'S ORDINATION, ETC.

1725
Age 22

WHAT was the state of things about the time of Wesley's ordination? Wesley entered the Charterhouse in the year Queen Anne died. George I., Elector of Hanover, took her place. Endless intrigues in favour of the Pretender sprung up; and Bolingbroke fled to him on the Continent, and became his Secretary of State. Ormond gave magnificent fêtes at Richmond, and gathered around him the most fiery of the Jacobites, and the most intolerant of the high church party, till he also found it expedient to follow Bolingbroke's example, and secretly escape to France. The clergy, in many instances, preached sermons and published pamphlets in which the temper, orthodoxy, and religion of King George were not painted in the brightest colours, and in which they hesitated not to say that England would soon be eaten up by Hanoverian rats and other foreign vermin. Rumours of invasion and of insurrection became general, and, about a year after George's coronation, the Chevalier landed in Scotland, to take possession of what he called his kingdom.

The history of this adventure is too well known to be repeated here. Suffice it to observe, that Parliament set a price on the Pretender's head, by offering a reward of £100,000 for his arrest. In Scotland, King George's troops were put to live in free quarters, in the houses and upon the estates of Jacobites. In England, gaols were crowded with nonjuring Protestants, high church divines, and Popish squires, monks, and priests; while the Chevalier, like his poltroon father, fled from danger, and left thousands of his hot-headed followers to pay a fearful penalty for their rash adherence to him. Plotters, however, still plotted; among the chief of whom was Bishop Atterbury, the friend and patron of Wesley's brother Samuel. The prelate was arrested, was tried in the House of Lords, was deprived of his bishopric, was banished from his

country, entered the service of the Pretender, and became his confidential agent. 1725 Age 21

These were times of terrible upheaving, and, surrounded by such commotions, young Wesley quietly pursued his scholastic studies, first in the Charterhouse, London, and afterwards in Christ Church College, Oxford. In the year in which Wesley went to Oxford, the South Sea bubble burst, and, by its gambling, knavish madness, the nation was involved in the most disgraceful kind of bankruptcy. About the same period, Parliament were discussing bills to authorize bishops and county magistrates to summon Dissenting ministers to quarter sessions to subscribe to a declaration of the Christian faith; and, upon their refusal, to deprive them of the benefit of the Act of Toleration; while, oddly enough, at the same time, Walpole, the prime minister, was endeavouring to satisfy the squeamish demand to omit from the "affirmation" of the Quakers the words,—"In the presence of Almighty God"—a demand which Atterbury resisted to the uttermost, insisting that such an indulgence was not due to "a set of people who were hardly Christians."

Wesley was ordained a deacon by Bishop Potter, the son of a Yorkshire linen-draper; a man of great talent, and immense learning,—somewhat haughty and morose, and yet highly esteemed by a great portion of his contemporaries,—a high churchman, who maintained that episcopacy was of Divine institution, and yet one who cherished a friendly feeling towards the first Methodists, saying concerning them, "These gentlemen are irregular; but they have done good; and I pray God to bless them." To the day of his death, Wesley held Potter in high esteem, calling him "a great and good man"; and, in a sermon written as late as the year 1787, mentioning an advice which the bishop had given him half a century before, and for which he had often thanked Almighty God, namely, "That if he wished to be extensively useful, he must not spend his time in contending for or against things of a disputable nature, but in testifying against notorious vice, and in promoting real, essential holiness."[1]

It is a somewhat remarkable circumstance that, just about

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. vii., p. 176.

1726 — Age 23

the time of Wesley's ordination, Voltaire was expelled from France, and fled to England, where he published his celebrated "Henriade," a work which was patronized by George I., and which yielded a profit that laid the foundation of the infidel's future fortune. During a long life, he and Wesley were contemporaneous, and, perhaps, of all the men then living, none exercised so great an influence as the restless philosopher and the unwearied minister of Christ. No men, however, could be more dissimilar. Wesley, in person, was beautiful; Voltaire was of a physiognomy so strange, and lighted up with fire so half-hellish and half-heavenly, that it was hard to say whether it was the face of a satyr or a man. Wesley's heart was filled with a world-wide benevolence; Voltaire, though of gigantic mind, scarcely had a heart at all,—an incarnation of avaricious meanness, and a victim to petty passions. Wesley was the friend of all and the enemy of none; Voltaire was too selfish to love, and when forced to pay the scanty and ill-tempered homage which he sometimes rendered, it was always offered at the shrine of rank and wealth. Wesley had myriads who loved him; Voltaire had numerous admirers, but probably not a friend. Both were men of ceaseless labour, and almost unequalled authors; but while the one filled the land with blessings, the other, by his sneering and mendacious attacks against revealed religion, inflicted a greater curse than has been inflicted by the writings of any other author either before or since. The evangelist is now esteemed by all whose good opinions are worth having; the philosopher is only remembered to be branded with well-merited reproach and shame.

Wesley's first sermon was preached at South Leigh, a small village three miles from Witney. Forty-six years afterwards he preached in the same place, when there was one man present who had been a member of his first congregation.[1]

Another of his early sermons was delivered at Epworth, January 11, 1726, at the funeral of John Griffith, a hopeful young man, son of one of the Epworth parishioners. The text was 2 Samuel xii. 23, and the subject of the brief sermon was the folly of indulging grief, except on account of sin.

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. iii., p. 420.

1726
Age 23

Funeral sermons, in the common acceptation of the word, the young preacher denounces, for they had been so often prostituted to a mere flattery of the dead that now they were no longer capable of serving good purposes. "It is of no service to the dead," says he, "to celebrate his actions, since he has the applause of God and His holy angels, and his own conscience. And it is of little use to the living, since he who desires a pattern may find enough proposed as such in the sacred writings." For such reasons, Wesley, already laconic, reduces all that he has to say of John Griffith into a single sentence. "To his parents he was an affectionate, dutiful son; to his acquaintance an ingenuous, cheerful, good-natured companion; and to me a well-tried, sincere friend."[1]

In a little more than two months after the delivery of this sermon, Wesley was elected fellow of Lincoln College.[2] The election took place March 17th, 1726. In this affair, his brother Samuel rendered him considerable assistance; his mother, with a full heart, thanked Almighty God for his "good success;"[3] and his father wrote him as follows:—

"DEAR MR. FELLOW ELECT OF LINCOLN,—I have done more than I could for you. On your waiting on Dr. Morley[4] with this, he will pay you £12. You are inexpressibly obliged to that generous man. The last £12 pinched me so hard, that I am forced to beg time of your brother Sam till after harvest, to pay him the £10 that you say he lent you. Nor shall I have as much as that, perhaps not £5, to keep my family till after harvest; and I do not expect that I shall be able to do anything for Charles when he goes to the university. What will be my own fate God only knows. *Sed passi graviora.* Wherever I am, my Jack is fellow of Lincoln. I wrote to Dr. King, desiring leave for you to come one, two, or three months into the country, where you shall be gladly welcome. Keep your best friend fast; and, next to him, Dr. Morley; and have a care of your other friends, especially the younger. All at present from your loving father,

"SAMUEL WESLEY."[5]

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[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1797, p. 425.

[2] Lincoln College consisted of a rector, twelve fellows, two chaplains, etc. The students numbered about fifty. The Bishop of Lincoln was visitor. The room occupied by Wesley is still designated "Wesley's room," and a vine creeping round its window is called "Wesley's vine."

[3] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 136.

[4] Dr. Morley was rector of Lincoln College. He was elected July 18th, 1719, and died at his rectory of Scotton, near Gainsborough, June 12th, 1731. He used great influence in procuring Wesley his fellowship.

[5] "Life and Times of S. Wesley," p. 399.

1726
Age 23

Writing to his brother Samuel, Wesley says :—

"LINCOLN COLLEGE, OXON, *April* 4, 1726.

"DEAR BROTHER,—My father very unexpectedly, a week ago, sent me a bill on Dr. Morley for £12, which he had paid to the rector's use at Gainsborough ; so that now all my debts are paid, and the expenses of my treat defrayed ; and I have still above £10 remaining. If I could have leave to stay in the country till my college allowance commences, this money would abundantly suffice me till then.

"I never knew a college besides ours, whereof the members were so perfectly well satisfied with one another, and so inoffensive to the other part of the university. All the fellows I have yet seen are both well-natured and well-bred ; men admirably disposed as well to preserve peace and good neighbourhood among themselves, as to preserve it wherever else they have any acquaintance.

"I am, etc.,

"JOHN WESLEY."[1]

The following, which was also addressed to his brother Samuel, is amusing. Wesley was so poor that he could ill afford to employ a barber to cut and dress his hair, even when his mother wished it, and when he himself thought it might improve his personal appearance.

"My mother's reason for my cutting off my hair is because she fancies it prejudices my health. As to my looks, it would doubtless mend my complexion to have it off, by letting me get a little more colour, and perhaps it might contribute to my making a more genteel appearance. But these, till ill health is added to them, I cannot persuade myself to be sufficient grounds for losing two or three pounds a year. I am ill enough able to spare them.

"Mr Sherman says there are garrets, somewhere in Peckwater, to be let for fifty shillings a year ; that there are some honest fellows in college, who would be willing to chum in one of them ; and that, could my brother but find one of these garrets, and get acquainted with one of these honest fellows, he might possibly prevail upon him to join in taking it ; and then if he could but prevail upon some one else to give him £7 a year for his own room, he would gain almost £6 a year clear, if his rent were well paid He appealed to me whether the proposal was not exceedingly reasonable ? But as I could not give him such an answer as he desired, I did not choose to give him any at all.

"Leisure and I have taken leave of one another. I propose to be busy as long as I live, if my health is so long indulged me. In health and sickness I hope I shall ever continue with the same sincerity,

"Your loving brother,

"JOHN WESLEY."[2]

[1] Letters published by Priestley, p. 2. [2] Ibid. p. 8.

1726
Age 23

Charles Wesley had just removed from Westminster School to the university, being elected to the same college as that in which his brother had spent the last six years. John obtained leave of absence from Lincoln College, and spent the summer at Epworth and Wroote with his venerated parents. Here he usually read prayers and preached twice every sabbath; pursued his studies with the greatest diligence; and conversed with his father and mother on many of the chief topics of practical religion, noting in his diary such of their rules and maxims as appeared to him important.[1] While here, he wrote his paraphrase on the 104th Psalm,—a production of genius fully showing that if Wesley had cultivated his poetic talents he might easily have attained to no inferior position among the bards of Britain. The following is an extract:—

"Thou, brooding o'er the realms of night,
The' unbottomed infinite abyss,
Bad'st the deep her rage surcease,
And saidst, *Let there be light!*
Ethereal light Thy call obeyed,
Glad she left her native shade,
Darkness turned his murmuring head,
Resigned the reins, and trembling fled."[2]

"Make poetry your diversion,"[3] said Wesley's mother, "but not your business;" and because he acted on this advice his poetical pieces are comparatively few. It is well known, however, that some of the noblest hymns in the Wesleyan hymn-book were written by John Wesley's pen. What can exceed, in poetic grandeur, the three hymns beginning with the line:—

"Father of all, whose powerful voice," etc.

Or the two hymns commencing with:—

"O God, Thou bottomless abyss," etc.

Or the hymn beginning:—

"O God, of good the' unfathomed sea," etc.

Or again:—

"O God the Son, in whom combine," etc.

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[1] Whitehead's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 403.
[2] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 141.
[3] Whitehead's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 407.

1727 Age 24

Or again :—

"Jesus, whose glory's streaming rays," etc.
"Now I have found the ground wherein," etc.
"Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness," etc.
"Thee will I love, my strength, my tower," etc.

Or again, the two hymns commencing with :—

"Commit thou all thy griefs," etc.

Or again :—

"Thou hidden love of God, whose height," etc.

Let it be granted that these and others were translations; but still it must be ceded that the words, if not the thoughts, are Wesley's; and that never, in uninspired language, is God adored and praised in loftier or more sacred strains than in the singing of the hymns above mentioned. Apart from his numerous hymn-books, Wesley, at different times, published five volumes of poetry, and, to the day of his death, read it with the richest relish.

Wesley returned to Oxford on the 21st of September, 1726, and resumed his studies. His literary character was now established at the university. All parties acknowledged him to be a man of talents and of learning; while his skill in logic was known to be remarkable. The result was, though he was only in the twenty-third year of his age, and had not yet taken a master's degree, he was, within two months after his return from Epworth, on November 7th, elected Greek lecturer and moderator of the classes.

At the commencement of the year 1727, Wesley, in a letter,[1] tells his mother that he had drawn up for himself a scheme of studies, and had "perfectly come over to her opinion, that there are many truths it is not worth while to know. If we had a dozen centuries of life allowed us, we might, perhaps, be pardoned for spending a little time upon such curious trifles; but, with the small pittance of life we have, it would be great ill husbandry to spend a considerable part of it in what makes neither a quick nor a sure return." Wesley adds, that, about the time of his ordination, he had, while watching with a college friend a young lady's funeral, attempted to make his friend a Christian. From that time

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 9.

this youth was exceedingly serious; and a fortnight ago had died of consumption. Wesley was with him three days before his decease, and on the Sunday following, in accordance with his friend's desire while living, he did him the last good office that he could by preaching his funeral sermon. Here was *Wesley's first convert.* 1727 Age 24

Another friend must be introduced, not so serious as the sight of a funeral has a tendency to make us, but a sprightly young collegian, more vivacious than religious, who, in 1729, became one of the first four Methodists that met together to read the Greek Testament,[1] and whose portrait occupies a place in the large and beautiful engraving of "The Rev. John Wesley and his Friends at Oxford." The following letter is valuable only as it tends to show that Wesley, and some of his college friends, were not yet so intensely religious as they became soon after.

"STANTON, *February* 2, 1727.

"WITH familiarity I write, Dear Jack.—On Friday night last I received your kind accusation. You generously passed by, or pardoned, all insipid or impertinent expressions; but I am condemned for brevity before I could put forth my defence. My plea is, I writ yours, as likewise one to Harry Yardley, of equal importance, in the space of three hours. My letter was really longer than yours by Scripture proof; for you writ scarce much out of your abundance of thoughts; whereas I writ all that I thought of, and thought of all I could write. I have not the presumption to compare my expressions or style with yours, because there I am excelled beyond all degrees of comparison.

'For when you write, smooth elocution flows;
But when Bob scrawls, rough ignorance he shows.'

I am just going down to a dinner of calves' head and bacon, with some of the best green cabbages in the town. I wish I could send you a plate of our entertainment while it is hot. We have just tapped a barrel of admirable cider.

"2 o'clock. I am come up again with a belly-full, *sufficit*. Your most deserving, queer character,—your worthy personal accomplishments,—your noble endowments of mind,—your little and handsome person,—and your obliging and desirable conversation, have been the pleasing subject of our discourse for some pleasant hours. You have often been in the thoughts of M. B., which I have curiously observed, when with her alone, by inward smiles and sighs and abrupt expressions concerning *you*. Shall this suffice? I caught her this morning in an humble and devout posture on her knees. I am called to read a *Spectator* to my sister Capoon. I

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. viii., p. 334.

1727 Age 24

long for the time when you are to supply my father's absence. Keep your counsel, and burn this when perused. You shall have my reasons in my next. I must conclude, and subscribe myself, your most affectionate friend, and *brother* I wish I might write,

"ROBERT KIRKHAM."[1]

The above somewhat frothy epistle indicates an important fact, that Wesley was in love with Miss Betty, Kirkham's sister, or, at all events, that Kirkham wished to have him for a brother. Nothing more is known of this incipient courtship, except that in a letter to Wesley, dated five days after Kirkham's, and written by Martha Wesley, it is said, "When I knew that you were just returned from Worcestershire, where I suppose you saw your *Varanese*, I then ceased to wonder at your silence, for the sight of such a woman, 'so known, so loved,' might well make you forget me. I really have myself a vast respect for her, as I must necessarily have for one that is so dear to you." Wesley soon became far too much immersed in more serious things to have time to think of wooing. He writes :—

"Removing to another (Lincoln) college, I began to see more and more the value of time. I applied myself closer to study. I watched more carefully against actual sins. I advised others to be religious, according to that scheme of religion by which I modelled my own life. But meeting now with Mr. Law's 'Christian Perfection' and 'Serious Call,' although I was much offended at many parts of both, yet they convinced me more than ever of the exceeding height and breadth and depth of the law of God. The light flowed in so mightily upon my soul, that everything appeared in a new view. I cried to God for help, resolved, as I had never done before, not to prolong the time of obeying Him. And by my continued endeavour to keep His whole law, inward and outward, to the utmost of my power, I was persuaded that I should be accepted of Him, and that I was even then in a state of salvation."[2]

William Law will have to be noticed hereafter. Suffice it to remark now, that, after obtaining a fellowship at Emanuel

[1] See *Wesleyan Times*, Feb. 26, 1866.
[2] Wesley's Works, vol. i., p. 93.

College, Cambridge, and officiating as a curate in the metropolis, he refused to take the oaths prescribed by parliament on the accession of George I., lost his fellowship, left the pulpit, and became tutor to Edward Gibbon, father of the renowned historian. He was now resident at Putney, and is described as rather above the middle size, stout but not corpulent, with broad shoulders, grey eyes, round visage, well proportioned features, an open countenance, and rather inclined to be merry than mournful. His "Christian Perfection" was first published in 1726, just before Wesley read it; and in strong, clear, racy language, maintains that Christianity requires a change of nature, a renunciation of the world and worldly tempers, self-denial and mortification, in short, a life perfectly devoted to the service of God. Clergymen are reminded that it is far more important to visit the poor and sick, and be wholly occupied in the cure of souls, than to be studying the old grammarians. Vain books and stage entertainments are denounced in the strongest terms; and a close imitation of the life and example of Christ Jesus is enforced with the utmost earnestness. The work throughout is one of the most intensely religious books in the English language; and had it shown the way of attaining holiness as clearly as it enforces the practice of it, it would in all respects have been unequalled. The "Serious Call" is a kindred book, and written in the same earnest and pungent style. "It is," wrote Wesley, within eighteen months of his decease,—"It is a treatise which will hardly be excelled, if it be equalled, in the English tongue, either for beauty of expression, or for justness and depth of thought."[1]

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The effect produced upon Wesley,[2] by reading these two invaluable books, was immense. "I was convinced," says he, "more than ever of the impossibility of being half a Christian, and determined to be all devoted to God, to give Him all my soul, my body, and my substance."[3]

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. vii., p. 284.

[2] It is a remarkable fact that Law's "Serious Call" produced a similar effect on Dr. Johnson. "When at Oxford," says Johnson, "I took it up expecting to find it a dull book, and perhaps to laugh at it. But I found Law quite an over-match for me; and this was the first occasion of my thinking in earnest of religion after I became capable of religious inquiry."

[3] Wesley's Works, vol. xi., p. 352.

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Wesley's intentions were as sincere and pure as grace could make them; but his ideas of Christian truth were confused, misty, erroneous. He was spending several hours every day in reading the Scripture in the original tongues; and yet he tells us that it was not until years after this that he became convinced of the great truths, which, above all other truths, gave rise to the societies of the people called Methodists. These truths he himself has specified in the following terms: —"The justification, whereof our articles and homilies speak, means present forgiveness, pardon of sins, and consequently acceptance with God. I believe the condition of this is faith; I mean not only that without faith we cannot be justified, but also that, as soon as any one has true faith, in that moment he is justified. Good works follow this faith, but cannot go before it; much less can sanctification, which implies a continued course of good works, springing from holiness of heart.

"Repentance must go before faith, and fruits meet for it, if there be opportunity. By repentance, I mean conviction of sin, producing real desires and sincere resolutions of amendment; and by 'fruits meet for repentance,' I mean forgiving our brother, ceasing from evil and doing good, using the ordinances of God, and in general obeying Him according to the measure of grace which we have received. But these I cannot as yet term good works; because they do not spring from faith and the love of God.

"By salvation I mean, not barely deliverance from hell, or going to heaven, but a present deliverance from sin, a restoration of the soul to its primitive health, its original purity; a recovery of the Divine nature; the renewal of our souls after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness, in justice, mercy, and truth. This implies all holy and heavenly tempers, and by consequence, all holiness of conversation.

"Faith is the sole condition of this salvation. Without faith we cannot thus be saved; for we cannot rightly serve God unless we love Him. And we cannot love Him unless we know Him; neither can we know Him unless by faith.

"Faith, in general, is a Divine, supernatural evidence, or conviction of things not seen; that is, of things past, future, or spiritual. Justifying faith implies, not only a Divine evidence, or conviction, that God was in Christ, reconciling the

world unto Himself; but a sure trust and confidence that Christ died for my sins; that He loved me and gave Himself for me. And the moment a penitent sinner believes this, God pardons and absolves him. 1727 Age 2

"And as soon as his pardon or justification is witnessed to him by the Holy Ghost, he is saved. He loves God and all mankind. He has the mind that was in Christ, and power to walk as He also walked. From that time (unless he makes shipwreck of the faith) salvation gradually increases in his soul.

"The Author of faith and salvation is God alone. He is the sole Giver of every good gift, and the sole Author of every good work. There is no more of power than of merit in man; but as all merit is in the Son of God, in what He has done and suffered for us, so all power is in the Spirit of God. And therefore every man, in order to believe unto salvation, must receive the Holy Ghost. This is essentially necessary to every Christian, in order to faith, peace, joy, and love. Whoever has these fruits of the Spirit cannot but know and feel that God has wrought them in his heart."

The reader has here, in Wesley's own words, a summary of all the doctrines which technically may be termed the doctrines of the *first Methodists.* It was the preaching of these doctrines, and of these only, that created Methodism in 1739. And, to be faithful to the principles of their founder, the Methodists of this, and of every age succeeding, *must*, MUST make these the *chief* doctrines of their ministry. Wesley preached other truths besides these: but these were the truths which distinguished him from his fellows; which gave birth to the system that bears his name; and which he always made *prominent* in his sermons and in his books, to the end of life. Methodism will sink and deservedly become extinct, when it ceases to proclaim, as its *greatest* dogmas, the above summary of Methodistic doctrines, drawn up by Wesley himself in 1744.

This summary is introduced here because, notwithstanding his deep religious feeling, his pure intentions, and his strict morality, the doctrines it embraces were doctrines of which Wesley remained strangely ignorant for nearly thirteen years after his ordination, in 1725. He writes: "It was many years

1727 Age 24 after I was ordained deacon, before I was convinced of the great truths above recited. During all that time, I was utterly ignorant of the nature and condition of justification. Sometimes I confounded it with sanctification (particularly when I was in Georgia); at other times I had some confused notion about the forgiveness of sins; but then I took it for granted the time of this must be either the hour of death, or the day of judgment. I was equally ignorant of the nature of saving faith; apprehending it to mean no more than a 'firm assent to all the propositions contained in the Old and New Testaments.'"[1]

Such, at this period, were Wesley's views of Christian truth, principally derived from his mother, from Thomas à Kempis, Jeremy Taylor, and William Law. Some have charged him with embracing the mystic divinity, but, except so far as the mystic writers denied the doctrine of justification by faith, the charge is unfounded. In reply to this accusation, Wesley writes: "It is true that, for a while, I admired the *mystic writers*. But I dropped them, even before I went to Georgia; long before I knew or suspected anything as to justification by faith. Therefore all that follows of my 'making my system of divinity more commodious for general use,' having no foundation, falls to the ground at once. I never was 'in the way of mysticism' at all."[2]

Wesley took his degree of Master of Arts, on February 14, 1727. In his disputation for this he acquired considerable reputation; delivering three lectures on the occasion, one "De Anima Brutorum;" a second, "De Julio Cæsare;" and a third, "De Amore Dei." These early orations seem to be entirely lost.

Another step taken by Wesley, about the same period, was to rid himself of unprofitable friends. He writes: "When it pleased God to give me a settled resolution to be not a *nominal*, but a *real* Christian (being then about twenty-two years of age), my acquaintance were as ignorant of God as myself. But there was this difference: I knew my own ignorance; they did not know theirs. I faintly endeavoured to

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. viii., p. 108.
[2] Ibid. vol. x., p. 387, and vol. xiii., p. 387.

help them, but in vain. Meantime, I found, by sad experience, that even their *harmless* conversation, so called, damped all my good resolutions. I saw no possible way of getting rid of them, unless it should please God to remove me to another college. He did so, in a manner utterly contrary to all human probability. I was elected fellow of a college where I knew not one person. I foresaw abundance of people would come to see me, either out of friendship, civility, or curiosity; and that I should have offers of acquaintance new and old: but I had now fixed my plan. I resolved to have no acquaintance by chance, but by choice; and to choose such only as would help me on my way to heaven. In consequence of this, I narrowly observed the temper and behaviour of all that visited me. I saw no reason to think that the greater part of these truly loved or feared God: therefore, when any of them came to see me, I behaved as courteously as I could; but to the question, 'When will you come to see me?' I returned no answer. When they had come a few times, and found I still declined returning the visit, I saw them no more. And, I bless God, this has been my invariable rule for about threescore years. I knew many reflections would follow; but that did not move me, as I knew full well it was my calling to go through evil report and good report."[1] 1727 Age 24

Thus did Wesley free himself from trifling companions. About the same time, some one proposed to him a well endowed school in Yorkshire, and suggested, as an inducement for him to accept it, that it was situated "in a little vale, so pent up between two hills" that it was scarcely accessible; a place where he could "expect little company from without, and within none at all."[2] This school was either never offered, or, if it was, the offer was declined.

Wesley now laid down a plan of study, and closely followed it. Mondays and Tuesdays he devoted to the Greek and Roman classics, historians and poets; Wednesdays, to logic and ethics; Thursdays to Hebrew and Arabic; Fridays to metaphysics and natural philosophy; Saturdays to oratory and poetry, chiefly composing; and Sundays, to divinity. In intermediate hours, he perfected himself in the French

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. vi., p. 447. [2] Ibid. vol. xii., p. 10.

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language, which he had begun to learn two or three years before; sometimes amused himself with experiments in optics; and in mathematics studied Euclid, Keil, and Sir Isaac Newton. First, he read an author regularly through, and then transcribed into a commonplace book such passages as he thought important or beautiful. In this way he greatly increased his stock of knowledge and inured himself to hard working.

His father was now sixty-five years of age, and was already palsied; his mother also was in exceedingly ill health; and hence, in August, 1727, he removed to Lincolnshire, for the purpose of officiating as his father's curate at Epworth and at Wroote; and here, with the exception of about three months, he remained until November, 1729.

The details of this period of two years and a quarter in Wesley's history are few. His life at Epworth and Wroote was doubtless the ordinary every-day sort of life of an earnest country parish clergyman. Fortunately, one of his sermons, preached during the time that he was his father's curate, has been preserved, and is important as showing how, from the very commencement of his ministry, he rigidly adhered to the principle of preaching the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. The text is 2 Corinthians ii. 17, and the subject of the sermon is that of "corrupting the word of God." Among corrupters he notices:—1. Those who introduce "into it human mixtures, and blend with the oracles of God impure dreams, fit only for the mouth of the devil." 2. Those who mix it "with false interpretations." 3. Those who do not add to it but take from it, "washing their hands of stubborn texts, that will not bend to their purposes, or that too plainly touch upon the reigning vices of the places where they live." Those who do not corrupt the word of God "preach it genuine and unmixed," unimpaired and in all its fulness. "They speak with plainness and boldness, and are not concerned to palliate their doctrine to reconcile it to the tastes of men. They will not, they dare not, soften a threatening so as to prejudice its strength; neither represent sin in such mild colours as to impair its native blackness."[1]

Here we have Wesley, in the twenty-fifth year of his age,

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1798, p. 505.

displaying the same conscientious fidelity and unflinching boldness, which so strikingly characterized the whole of his future ministry. 1723 Age 25

In July, 1728, Wesley repaired to Oxford, where, on Sunday, September 22, he was ordained priest by Dr. Potter, who had ordained him deacon in 1725. Nine days afterwards, he returned to his curacy at Wroote, where, as already stated, he continued preaching and fulfilling other ministerial duties until November 22, 1729.

What were the results of Wesley's preaching? Wesley himself shall tell us. He writes: "I preached much, but saw no fruit of my labour. Indeed, it could not be that I should; for I neither laid the foundation of repentance, nor of believing the gospel; taking it for granted that all to whom I preached were believers, and that many of them needed no repentance."[1] Let Christian ministers be admonished. Is it not a fact—a general, if not universal fact—that where these doctrines are not preached all other preaching is almost, if not altogether, useless? Christ's ministry throughout was in perfect accordance with its commencement, when following John the Baptist, as His high herald, He cried, "Repent ye, and believe the gospel." This kind of preaching is always useful. Would to God we had more of it at the present day!

Wroote was a wretched place. Wesley says it was "surrounded with bogs";[2] and, according to Samuel, his brother, the parsonage was roofed with thatch and made lively by the mingled music of "kittens and whelps," "pigs and porkets," "bellowing kine and bleating lambs, quacking ducks and fluttering hens." Describing his father's presence there, he writes:—

> "Methinks I see you striving all
> Who first shall answer to his call,
> Or lusty Nan or feeble Moll,
> Sage Pat, or sober Hetty;
> To rub his cassock's draggled tail,
> Or reach his hat from off the nail,
> Or seek the key to draw his ale,
> When damsel haps to steal it;

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. viii., p. 450. [2] Ibid. vol. iii., p. 340.

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To burn his pipe, or mend his clothes,
Or nicely darn his russet hose,
For comfort of his aged toes,
So fine they cannot feel it."[1]

The church was a small brick building, and the population, even as late as 1821, was under three hundred. The people were, says Mehetabel Wesley, "unpolished wights," as "dull as asses," and with heads "as impervious as stones."

Such were Wesley's parish and parishioners—not exactly the place where a poetical genius and classic scholar was likely to luxuriate; and yet there is no reason to entertain a doubt that Wesley was happy in his new sphere of labour. He loved retirement, and here he had it. It is not improbable that, for many a long year, Wroote would have been his residence, had not the rector of Lincoln College wished to have him back to Oxford. This gentleman had rendered such service to the Wesley family that the venerable father used to say, "I can refuse him nothing."[2] Accordingly, the following letter, by Dr. Morley, was irresistible.

"*October* 21, 1729.

"At a meeting of the society, just before I left college, to consider the proper method to preserve discipline and good government, it was, in the opinion of all present, judged necessary that the junior fellows, who should be chosen moderators, shall in person attend the duties of their office, if they do not prevail with some of the fellows to officiate for them. We all thought it would be a great hardship on Mr. Fenton to call him from a perpetual curacy; yet this we must have done, had not Mr. Hutchins been so kind to him and us as to engage to supply his place in the hall for the present year. Mr. Robinson would as willingly supply yours, but the serving of two cures, about fourteen miles from Oxford, makes it, he says, impossible to discharge the duty constantly. We hope it may be as much for your advantage to reside at college as where you are, if you take pupils, or can get a curacy in the neighbourhood of Oxon. Your father may certainly have another curate, though not so much to his satisfaction; yet we are persuaded that this will not move him to hinder your return to college, since the interests of the college and obligation to statute require it."

And so, because Fenton had a perpetual curacy, too good to be given up; and because Robinson, in his two parishes, had

[1] "Poems, by S. Wesley."
[2] Whitehead's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 413.

as much work as he could do, Wesley was forcibly removed from Wroote, and brought back to Oxford to fulfil his functions as a fellow. No time was lost. He returned to Oxford on November 22, 1729, and here continued until he embarked for Georgia on the 14th of October, 1735. 1729 Age 26

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CHAPTER III.

OXFORD METHODISM, ETC.

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WESLEY returned to Oxford shortly after the coronation of George II. In some respects this was an age of giants. Bolingbroke, though a rake and an infidel, was a man of exalted powers and of splendid eloquence. Walpole, more than any other man, was the means of keeping the British crown on the heads of the house of Hanover. The Earl of Granville, by his brilliant talents, raised himself to the highest offices of state; though thinking ignorance the best security for obedience, he opposed the education of the poor, and disliked the propagation of Christ's religion in the colonies. Chesterfield was a gambler and a *roue*, but, as Johnson said, "he was also a wit among lords, and a lord among wits."

In the Church, Atterbury, though a Jacobite, passionate, ambitious, and double dealing, was also talented, learned, and eloquent. Whiston, though extremely heterodox, was a man of great ability. Gibson, Bishop of London, was one whose piety was equal to his erudition. Hoadly, Bishop of Winchester, has, not without reason, been pronounced "the greatest dissenter that ever wore a mitre." Sherlock was famous for his pulpit power. The head of Waterland was "an immense library, where the treasures of learning were arranged in such exact order that whatever he or his friends wanted he could produce at once." To these might be added Butler, Secker, Warburton, and others.

Among the Dissenters we find Edmund Calamy, Isaac Watts, Nathaniel Lardner, and Philip Doddridge.

Among men of science and of letters, Edmund Halley was exploring the starry heavens; and Sir Hans Sloane was revelling among the plants and flowers of earth. Nicholas Saunderson, blind from childhood, was lecturing upon optics; Roubiliac was making marble almost breathe, and Handel

composing his immortal oratorios. Tindal was pouring out his streams of erudite infidelity. Daniel Defoe was still living. Bentley was at the zenith of his literary fame. Jonathan Swift was playing the part of a clever ecclesiastical buffoon. Edward Young was pondering poetry among the tombs of his own churchyard. Pope was employing his accomplished genius, surrounded by the beauties of his lovely retreat at Twickenham. Gay was composing comedies with more ability than ambition. Richardson, afterwards the novelist, was writing "indexes, prefaces, and honest dedications." Savage was penning beautiful ideas amid tavern riots and cellar filth. Thomson, so lazy as to be a fit occupant for his own "Castle of Indolence," was suffering his eye to roll in a fine frenzy among the beauties of the "Seasons"; and Samuel Johnson was preparing himself to be the Jupiter of letters, and to rule the literary world. 1729 Age 26

Greatness unfortunately does not always give birth to goodness. "Never," says a modern writer,[1] "has century risen on Christian England so void of soul and faith as that which opened with Queen Anne, and which reached its misty noon beneath the second George—a dewless night succeeded by a sunless dawn. There was no freshness in the past, and no promise in the future. The Puritans were buried, and the Methodists were not born. The philosopher of the age was Bolingbroke, the moralist was Addison, the minstrel was Pope, and the preacher was Atterbury. The world had the idle, discontented look of the morning after some mad holiday, and, like rocket-sticks and the singed paper from last night's squibs, the spent jokes of Charles and Rochester lay all about, and people yawned to look at them. The reign of buffoonery was past, but the reign of faith and earnestness had not commenced."

Let it not be said that this is modern imagination. Bishops are or ought to be sober minded men, and to one of these we refer the reader for a testimony concerning the moral and religious state of England during the period of which we are now writing. The Bishop of Lichfield, in 1724, in a sermon before the Society for the Reformation of Manners, said :—

[1] *North British Review*, 1847.

1729 Age 26 "The Lord's day is now the devil's market day. More lewdness, more drunkenness, more quarrels and murders, more sin is contrived and committed on this day than on all the other days of the week together. Strong liquors are become the epidemic distemper of this great city. More of the common people die of consumptions, fevers, dropsies, colics, palsies, and apoplexies, contracted by the immoderate use of brandies and distilled waters, than of all other distempers besides, arising from other causes. Sin, in general, is grown so hardened and rampant, as that immoralities are defended, yea, justified on principle. Obscene, wanton, and profane books find so good a market as to encourage the trade of publishing them. Every kind of sin has found a writer to teach and vindicate it, and a bookseller and hawker to divulge and spread it."

These were not rash and random statements. From the report of the society before which the bishop preached, it appears that in that very year, 1724, the society had prosecuted not fewer than 2723 persons for lewd, profane, drunken, and gambling practices; and that during the last thirty-three years the number of their prosecutions had been 89,393.

From the literature of the period, we learn that gin-drinking in the great towns of England had become a mania; the sellers of this pernicious spirit announcing on their signboards that they would make a man drunk for a penny, and find him straw on which to lie till he recovered the use of his lost faculties. In 1736 every sixth house in London was a licensed grogshop, and parliament, to check the evil, enacted that all intoxicating spirits should pay a duty of £1 per gallon, and every victualler £50 per annum for his licence.

In the higher classes of society, the taint left by Charles II. and his licentious court still festered. Among the lower classes, laziness and dishonesty were next to universal. Superstition flourished almost as vigorously as it had done in the middle ages, and nearly every old mansion in England was haunted by a ghost, and almost every parish tormented by a witch. In the metropolis, Ranelagh and Vauxhall were the resorts of thousands, of the upper strata of society; and puppet-shows, hops, balls, prize-fights, merry meetings, cock-fights, and badger-baitings furnished entertainment for the

masses. In the rural districts, rustic squires found their greatest enjoyment in hunting foxes, and in gorging venison, and guzzling sack; while the peasantry relieved the monotony of their daily toils at wakes and fairs, and in wrestling, cudgel playing, and foot racing. 1729 — Age 26

Extravagance was the order of the day. Scarcely one family in ten kept within its income. The grand controversy then, as now, was, who should *out-dress*, *out-drink*, or *out-eat* his neighbour. Citizens and young tradesmen, whose ancestors would have fainted at the sight of drawing-rooms, were the chief visitors at plays and masquerades; and even shopkeepers were seen wearing long wigs and swords, velvet breeches and hunting caps. Families, who were oftentimes resolved into committees on ways and means to pay a butcher's bill, paraded themselves in attire the most pompous, and adorned with the richest brocades and jewels. London swarmed with ruined rakes and broken traders, who contrived to live in the best society by reciting scraps of poetry, singing licentious songs, and retailing drunken puns and quibbles. In fact, all ranks and classes seemed to be corrupted to the core. "A sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers; children that are corrupters; the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint; from the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds, bruises, and putrifying sores."

What was done to improve this state of things? From a report of the charity schools, we learn that, in 1715, there were, throughout the kingdom, 1193 schools for the education of the children of the poor, containing 26,920 scholars. In other words, and to say nothing of other churches, there are at present in the Wesleyan-Methodist day-schools of England four times more scholars than there were in all the schools for primary education throughout the kingdom in 1715.

Turning from schools to churches, there is no amelioration of the dark picture. The Church, which ought to have reformed the nation, needed to be reformed itself. The Dissenters complained of their ministers conforming to the Establishment, but comforted themselves with thinking that the apostates were mainly young fops and dandies. The

1729 Age 26 three Dissenting denominations, Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists, considered themselves the great barriers to the doctrine of passive obedience to the crown, and of submission to the priestly encroachments of the Church. They maintained that they had greatly contributed to the interests of the Protestant succession, and had promoted a better observance of the sabbath, and the more frequent preaching of the high church clergy; but still they lamented that numbers of their ministers were immoral, negligent, and insufficient; that they devoted too much time to the fashionable study of the classics, and read their sermons instead of preaching them. They also complained of their children being sent to high church schools, and of the artful caballing of their congregations in appointing ministers to vacant pastorates. (See "Observations upon the Present State of the Dissenting Interest." London: 1731.)

The clergy of the Established Church! What of them? Bishop Burnet, in 1713, wrote: "Our ember weeks are the burden and grief of my life. The much greater part of those who come to be ordained are ignorant to a degree not to be apprehended by those who are not obliged to know it. The easiest part of knowledge is that to which they are the greatest strangers; I mean the plainest parts of the Scriptures. They can give no account, or at least a very imperfect one, of the contents even of the gospels, or of the catechism itself."

This is a doleful picture, but there was more than this. The dissensions in the Church of England then were quite as violent as dissensions now. The high church clergy were moral, and many of them talented and learned, but they were as intolerant as intolerance could make them. Of course, they held that none were ministers of Christ except those who had been *episcopally* ordained; and hence they held that all sacraments administered by Dissenters were invalid, and all Dissenting churches in a state of sin and damnation. They boldly preached the doctrine of a proper sacrifice being made in the Christian eucharist, and most furiously contended for the Divine right of kings, and the kindred dogma of passive obedience. Many of them, in heart at least, were Jacobites, and, while promising allegiance, regarded King George as a usurper, and branded those of their brethren who differed

from them with opprobrium. Endless were the pamphlets published, and fierce were the feuds of those who ought to have dwelt together in unity. The foulest sins were made sinless by intemperate zeal for the Pretender, and the fairest virtues were besmeared in those who showed a friendly feeling for Dissenters. A man might be drunken and quarrelsome all the week, but if on Sunday he bowed to the altar and cursed King William he was esteemed a saint. He might cheat everybody, and pay nobody, but if he drank health to the royal orphan, hated King George, and abhorred the Whigs, his want of probity was a peccadillo scarce worth noticing. On the other hand, a man might be learned, diligent, devout, and useful, but if he opposed the Pretender and Popery, or if he thought the Dissenters should not be damned, he was at once set down as heterodox, and, according to his importance, became a target for the poisoned shafts of high church malice. 1729 Age 26

Such, in brief, was the state of things when God raised up the Methodists. The court of England was corrupt to its very core, and the people were too faithful imitators of a bad example. Popery was intriguing, Dissenters were declining, and the Church was full of fiery and drunken feuds. Reformers, like the Methodists, were needed. Without them, or others of a kindred spirit, the nation must have sunk into an inconceivable depth of depravity, and social and political degradation. In estimating the benefits which have accrued from the great Methodist movement, the reader must think not only of the good effected but of the ill averted.

Methodism arose in Oxford, and not before it was needed, even there. When Wesley returned to the university in 1729, the vice-chancellor, the heads of houses and proctors, issued an edict, which was posted in most of the college halls, to the effect that certain members of the university had of late been in danger of being corrupted by the wicked and blasphemous notions of the advocates of pretended human reason against Divine revelation; and that therefore it was a matter of the utmost consequence that the college tutors should use double diligence in explaining to their respective pupils the articles of religion and their Christian duty, and in recommending to them the frequent and careful reading of

1729 Age 26 the Scriptures, and such other books as might serve more effectually the orthodox faith and sound principles.

The Dean of Christ Church, however, where Charles Wesley was a tutor, was so much a friend to infidelity, that he forbade the posting of this edict in his college hall, forgetting that there was One higher than himself, who, in that very college, had already begun to raise one of the strongest barriers against the spread of this pernicious evil.

A few months afterwards, on the 4th of July, 1730, it was announced in *Fogg's Weekly Journal*, that one of the principal colleges in Oxford had of late been infested with Deists, and that three Deistical students had been expelled, and a fourth had had his degree deferred two years, during which he was to be closely confined in college, and, among other things, was to translate Leslie's "Short and Easy Method with the Deists."

Wesley was now a tutor in Lincoln College, and presided in the hall as Moderator in the disputations, six of which were held weekly; and, by this, he acquired the remarkable expertness in arguing, and in discerning and pointing out well concealed and plausible fallacies, which distinguished him to the end of life. He writes: "In November, 1729, the then Rector of Lincoln College, Dr. Morley, sent for me to Oxford, to take pupils, eleven of whom he put under my care immediately. In this employ I continued[1] till 1735, when I went as a *missioner* to Georgia." Several of Wesley's pupils were among the first Oxford Methodists.

The Methodist movement, however, was begun not by Wesley, but by his brother Charles. When the latter was elected to Christ Church, in 1726, he was a sprightly, rollicking young fellow, with more genius than grace. John spoke to him about religion, but Charles answered, "What, would you have me to be a saint all at once!" This was an unfavourable beginning; but, while John was serving as his father's curate at Epworth and at Wroote, Charles began to attend the weekly sacrament, and induced two or three other students to attend with him. On John's return from Lincolnshire, he heartily united with his brother and his friends. The regularity of their behaviour led a young collegian to

[1] Rawlinson's Continuation of Wood's "Athenæ Oxoniensis."

call them Methodists; and "as the name," says Wesley, "was new and quaint, it clave to them immediately, and, from that time, all that had any connection with them were thus distinguished."[1] 1729 Age 26

The name was not new. Wesley says "it was given in allusion to an ancient sect of physicians, of the time of the Emperor Nero, who taught that almost all diseases might be cured by a specific *method* of diet and exercise."[2] This might be so, and yet it is a curious fact that the name was in use in England long before it was applied to Wesley and his friends. In 1693 a pamphlet was published with the title, "A War among the Angels of the Churches: wherein is shewed the Principles of the New Methodists in the great point of Justification. By a Country Professor of Jesus Christ." And even as early as 1639, in a sermon preached at Lambeth the following perfumed eloquence occurs:—"Where are now our Anabaptists, and plain pack-staff Methodists, who esteem all flowers of rhetoric in sermons no better than stinking weeds, and all elegance of speech no better than profane spells?"

The two young gentlemen who, with Wesley and his brother Charles, were first called Methodists, were Robert Kirkham, already mentioned on a previous page, and William Morgan.[3] To these were subsequently added, George Whitefield, John Clayton, J. Broughton, Benjamin Ingham, James Hervey, John Whitelamb, Westley Hall, John Gambold, Charles Kinchin, William Smith, and Messrs. Salmon, Wogan, Boyce, Atkinson, and others.[4]

What shall we say of these Oxford Methodists?

William Morgan's career was brief and painful; he was the first Methodist who passed the pearly gates of the celestial city. Charles Kinchin, a lovely character, soon followed him. Charles Wesley, in his incomparable hymns, left behind him one of the noblest legacies that an uninspired man ever bequeathed to the Christian church. George Whitefield was the

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. vii., p. 402. [2] Ibid. vol. ix., p. 124.
[3] Ibid. vol. viii., p. 334.
[4] For want of space, the writer, with great reluctance, has been compelled to omit a long biographical chapter respecting these first Oxford Methodists. If life be spared, however, the details, in an expanded form, may be published hereafter. Such a book would serve as a companion volume to the present publication.

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prince of preachers—a glorious emblem of the apocalyptic angel flying through the midst of heaven with the good tidings of great joy unto all people. And James Hervey will be loved and honoured as long as there are men to appreciate the highest order of Christian piety and the most mellifluent compositions in the English language.

The history of the Oxford Methodists is not, however, an unspotted one. Clayton's high churchism was not an excellency to be admired. Broughton's usefulness was crippled and cut short by his imperfect, stunted, stereotyped views of Christian truth. Westley Hall, though we hope he died a penitent, was, throughout the greatest part of his vicious life, an unmitigated scamp. John Whitelamb sunk down into an ecclesiastical village drone. Gambold, though good, was visionary, and throughout life was injured by his Moravian maggots. And Ingham, for many years one of the most successful of evangelists, through the ill judged connections that he formed, died beneath a cloud. But, with all these drawbacks, the reader is challenged to produce a band of godly friends, whose lives and labours have, upon the whole, issued in such an amount of blessing to mankind as that which has resulted from the lives and labours of the students who, in 1735, were known as "Oxford Methodists." They were widely scattered; their views were different; they were often brought into painful collision with each other; but, with the one or two exceptions mentioned, they were all sincere, earnest, laborious, successful ministers of Christ; and five or six of them must for ever occupy a high position in the history of the Christian church. Clayton shunned the Wesleys; Broughton opposed them; Ingham left them; Hervey, though with Christian courtesy, wrote against them; Gambold, at one period, hesitated not to say that he was ashamed of them; and even Whitefield, for a little while, was alienated from them; but we earnestly hope and have little doubt that they have all long been re-united in that blessed world where friends are free from misconceptions, and where the din of controversial strife does not exist—a world where all churches are merged into one grand Church, the members of which make one vast, happy, and harmonious family, and sing in the same ceaseless tune the same great song for ever—the song of Moses and of the Lamb.

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Of the Methodists, three were tutors in colleges; and the rest were bachelors of arts, or undergraduates. All were of one judgment and of one heart; and all tenacious of order to the last degree, and observant, for conscience sake, of every rule of the Church, and every statute both of the university and of their respective colleges. They all thought themselves orthodox in every point, firmly believing, not only the three creeds, but whatsoever they judged to be the doctrine of the Church of England, as contained in her articles and homilies. Practically, they had all things common; and no one was allowed to want what another had the ability to spare.[1] Wesley was nicknamed "the Curator of the Holy Club," and not a few branded him a "crack-brained enthusiast"; and yet others acknowledged that though his views and doctrines were peculiar his piety was unimpeachable; and Mr. Gerard, the bishop's chaplain, dared to express an opinion to George Lascelles, one of his revilers, that he "would one day be a standard-bearer of the cross, either in his own country or beyond the seas."[2] Charles Wesley paid the utmost deference to his brother, and all the Methodists acknowledged his fitness to be their chief director. This was not surprising, for, confessedly, he had more learning and experience than the others; and was blessed with such activity and steadiness that he was always gaining ground, and losing none. Every affair was well considered before he propounded it, and all his decisions were made in the fear of God, without passion, or self confidence. His countenance also wore an air of authority; and yet there was no assumption of super-eminence; but all were allowed to speak their minds with the utmost freedom, and no one was a more respectful listener than himself. Hence it was that whatever proposals he submitted, they were readily adopted, and the brotherhood was as perfect as unity of sentiment and feeling could make it.

Every night they met together,[3] to review what each had

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. vii., p. 402.
[2] *Methodist Magazine*, 1832, p. 793.
[3] The notes of their proceedings, in Wesley's handwriting, still exist, in a small 18mo volume, possessed by the family of the late Rev. Dr. Adam Clarke. (See Catalogue of Dr. Clarke's MSS., p. 93.)

1729 Age 26 done during the day, and to consult what should be done the day following; their meetings always commencing with prayer, and ending with a frugal supper. Their plans of action were various. Some conversed with young students, and endeavoured to rescue them from evil company, and to encourage them in a sober and studious life. Others undertook the instruction and relief of impoverished families; others the charge of some particular school, and others of the parish workhouse. Some or other of them went daily to the Castle, and to the city prison, reading in the chapel, to as many of the prisoners as would attend, books like the "Christian Monitor" and the "Country Parson's Advice to his Parishioners," and then summing up the reading in a few sentences easy to be remembered. On the introduction of a new prisoner, they would subject him to the most searching examination as to whether he bore malice towards his prosecutors or others, and whether he repented of his sins, and used private prayer, and received the sacrament. Out of their own scanty means, and by quarterly contributions from others, they raised a fund to purchase books, medicines, and other necessaries for the prisoners, and to release those who were confined for debts of small amount. They read prayers at the Castle on most Wednesdays and Fridays, preached a sermon to the prisoners every Sunday, and administered the sacrament once a month. One of the schools which they visited was a school which Wesley himself had founded, the mistress of which he paid, and some, if not all, of the children of which he clothed.

In all this the world saw nought but oddity and folly, and called these hardworking and godly students "Bible bigots," and "Bible moths;" but, in the midst of all, Wesley calmly pursued the path which he had marked out for himself and his friends. Gambold, in a letter written whilst Wesley was in Georgia, tells us that Wesley at Oxford was always cheerful but never arrogant. By strict watchfulness, he beat down the impetuosity of his nature into a childlike simplicity. His piety was nourished by continual communion with God, for he thought prayer to be his greatest duty; and often did Gambold see him come out of his closet of devotion with a serenity of countenance that was next to shining. The secret

consolations of God seldom left him, and never but in a posture of strong and long-suffering faith. In him there were no idle cravings, no chagrin or sickliness of spirit. Slanders never ruffled him, and his chief fear was lest he should grow proud of this conformity to his great Master. Coming home from long journeys, where he had been in different companies, he would calmly resume his usual employments, as if he had never left them. Himself setting an example, he urged upon his associates method, diligence, and early rising. His hours for private devotion were from five to six o'clock every morning and every night. Every day he noted in a diary what had been his chief employments; and one day every week he set apart for writing letters to his friends.[1] 1729 Age 26

His charity to the poor was limited only by the means at his command. One cold winter's day, he tells us, a young girl, whom the Methodists kept at school, called upon him in a state nearly frozen, to whom he said, "You seem half-starved; have you nothing to wear but that linen gown?" The poor girl said, "Sir, this is all I have." Wesley put his hand in his pocket, but found it nearly empty. The walls of his chamber however were hung with pictures, and these now became his accusers. "It struck me," says he, "will thy Master say, 'Well done, good and faithful steward'? thou hast adorned thy walls with the money which might have screened this poor creature from the cold! O Justice! O Mercy! Are not these pictures the blood of this poor maid?"[2] To say the least, this story shows the intense conscientiousness of the man, and his dread of spending anything upon himself which might have been spent more properly upon the poor. He says it was the practice of all the Oxford Methodists to give away each year all they had after providing for their own necessities; and then, as an illustration, he adds, in reference to himself, "One of them had thirty pounds a year. He lived on twenty-eight, and gave away forty shillings. The next year receiving sixty pounds, he still lived on twenty-eight, and gave away thirty-two. The third year he received ninety

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1798, p. 118, etc.
[2] Wesley's Works, vol. vii., p. 20.

1729 Age 26 pounds, and gave away sixty-two. The fourth year he received a hundred and twenty pounds; still he lived as before on twenty-eight, and gave to the poor all the rest."[1]

Wesley at Oxford was as conscientious in the use of time as he was in the use of money. Finding that he awoke every night about twelve or one o'clock, he concluded that this arose from his lying longer in bed than nature needed; and, to satisfy himself, he procured an alarum which aroused him next morning at seven, an hour earlier than he rose the day previous; but still he lay awake again at night. The second morning his alarum roused him up at six; and the third at five; but notwithstanding this he still lay awake when he ought to have been fast asleep. The fourth morning, by means of his alarum, he got up at four, and now wakefulness was unknown to him. Sixty years after adopting this expedient to ascertain how much sleep his nature needed, he wrote, "By the grace of God, I have risen at four o'clock ever since; and, taking the year round, I don't lie awake a quarter of an hour together in a month."[2]

The Bible now, as ever afterwards, was Wesley's book of books. He writes: "In 1729, I began not only to read, but to study, the Bible, as the one, the only standard of truth, and the only model of pure religion. Hence, I saw, in a clearer and clearer light, the indispensable necessity of having 'the mind which was in Christ,' and of 'walking as Christ also walked.' I considered religion as an entire inward and outward conformity to our Master. Nor was I afraid of anything more than of bending this rule to the experience of myself, or of other men; or of allowing myself in any the least disconformity to our grand Exemplar."[3]

Such was Wesley in 1729. What about his friends? To some extent, their principles and practice may be learnt from the scheme of self-examination they adopted. They tried to act upon the principle of doing nothing without a previous perception that it was the will of God. Every morning and every evening they spent an hour in private prayer. They always prayed in going in and out of church. Three days

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. vii., p. 34. [2] Ibid. vol. vii., p 65.
[3] Ibid. vol. xi., p. 352.

every week, though separate from each other, they, at the same hour, prayed in concert. In secret devotion they frequently stopped short to observe if they were using proper fervour, and, before concluding in the name of Christ, they adverted to the Saviour now interceding on their behalf at the right hand of God, and offering up their prayers. They habituated themselves to the use of ejaculations for humility, faith, hope, and love; used a collect every day at nine, twelve, and three o'clock; and each one said aloud, in his own room, a grace before and after eating. They embraced every possible opportunity of doing good, and of preventing, removing, or lessening evil. They tried to spend an hour every day in speaking to men directly on religious things, never relinquishing the objects of their attention till they were positively repelled, and always, before addressing them, trying to learn, as far as possible, their tempers, way of life, and peculiar hindrances. In order to converse usefully, they planned every conversation before they went into company; and considered what subject would be most useful, and how to prosecute it.[1] They persuaded all they could to attend public prayers, sermons, and sacraments; and, in general, to obey the laws of the church catholic, the Church of England, the state, the university, and their respective colleges. They refrained from thinking or speaking unkindly of any one; and used intercession for their friends on Sundays, for their pupils on Mondays, for those who particularly desired it on Wednesdays and Fridays, and for the family with whom they lodged every day.[2] They also communicated at Christ Church once a week.[3] 1729 Age 26

They had one, and only one, rule of judgment, with regard to all their tempers, words, and actions—namely, the oracles of God, and were one and all determined to be Bible Christians. The book which, next to the holy Scripture, was of the greatest use to them, in settling their judgment as to the grand point of justification by faith, was the Book of Homilies.[4]

They were tenacious, not only of all the doctrines of the

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 82. [2] Ibid. vol. xi., p. 498.
[3] Ibid. vol. xiii., p. 288; also, *Methodist Magazine*, 1781, p. 319.
[4] Wesley's Works, vol. vii., p. 193.

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Church of England, but of all her discipline, to the minutest points, and were scrupulously strict in observing the rubrics and canons. In short, "they were," says Wesley, "in the strongest sense, high churchmen."[1]

Many of their proceedings were ecclesiastically irregular, though religiously right; and Wesley, fearful of doing evil even while doing good, wrote to his brother Samuel and to his father for advice. Samuel replied that, though there might be some things concerning which he was dubious, yet he would choose to follow his two brothers to the grave rather than they should abandon their course of piety, and especially that relating to the prisoners in the Castle.[2] The venerable rector, in his reply, said: "As to your designs and employments, what can I say less than *Valde probo;* and that I have the highest reason to bless God that He has given me two sons together at Oxford, to whom He has granted grace and courage to turn the war against the world and the devil?" At the same time, however, he advised them to obtain consent to visit the prisoners from the chaplain, who had charge of them, and likewise to seek the approbation of their bishop. This advice was adopted; the chaplain commended their design; and the bishop expressed himself as highly pleased with their undertaking.[3]

At the commencement of the year 1730, Wesley had the offer of a curacy, eight miles from Oxford, for three or for six months, at the rate of £30 a year; and this he readily accepted, not only because it opened to him a field of usefulness, but also because it enabled him to retain his horse, when he began to feel that he must sell it; for if he had not a horse of his own he must hire one to ride to his cure on Sundays, and the *hire* would be quite as expensive as the *keep*.[4]

It was in the same year that he begun his remarkable correspondence with Mary Granville, afterwards the celebrated wife and widow of the Very Rev. Dr. Delany, Dean of Down, in Ireland. Mary Granville, while living in Gloucestershire, became acquainted with Sarah, daughter of the Rev. Lionel Kirkham, of Staunton; and, ever after,

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. viii., pp. 334, 487. [2] Benson's "Apology," p. 25.
[3] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 169.
[4] Original letter in *Wesleyan Times*, May 12, 1866.

the two ladies were the most devoted friends.[1] We have already seen that Wesley was a visitor of the Kirkhams; and that, in 1726, a warm-hearted intimacy existed between him and one of the young ladies of that family, whose pet name, among her friends, was "Varanese." It is almost certain that it was here Wesley was first introduced to the remarkable woman above-mentioned. Their correspondence with each other was conducted in feigned names, Wesley calling himself "Cyrus," and Mary Granville calling herself "Aspasia," that being the name by which she was often designated by her most intimate acquaintance.[2] The first letter from "Aspasia" is dated "August 28th, 1730." She writes:— 1730 Age 27

"SIR,—I think myself extremely obliged to you for the favour of the sermon and the letters. I received them safe last week, and should sooner have made my acknowledgments for them, but that I have been engaged with so much company since my return from dear, delightful Staunton, that, till this moment, I have not had time to express my gratitude for the elegant entertainment I have had, not only from the manuscripts, but in recollecting and repeating the conversation you and your brother made so agreeable, which I hope will soon be renewed. If you have any affairs that call you to Gloucester, don't forget that you have two pupils, who are desirous of improving their understanding; and that friendship has already taught them to be, sir, your most sincere, humble servants. My companion joins me in all I have said, as well as in service to Araspes."[3]

The companion referred to was probably Mary Granville's mother (with whom also Wesley corresponded),[4] or her beloved friend, Sarah Kirkham. Araspes was most likely a feigned name for Wesley's brother Charles. On the fly-leaf of the letter there is a postscript, in the handwriting of Mary Granville's sister, whose pet name was Selina, telling Wesley that Aspasia was about to visit Bath, and that, if he designed to wait upon her, he had best write to her to ascertain her movements. He is further told that "Varanese" (see Robert Kirkham's letter, p. 50) had sent him a letter by the carrier about a fortnight ago, and wished to know whether it had come safe to hand.

[1] See "Autobiography of Mrs. Delany." [2] Ibid. vol. i., p. 40.
[3] See original letter, *Wesleyan Times*, May 28, 1866.
[4] "Autobiography of Mrs. Delany," vol. i., p. 269.

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Mary Granville, at this period, was the widow of Alexander Pendarves, Esq., and was three years older than Wesley. As a member of the Lansdowne family, she had moved in the most fashionable circles of London society, and was now a frequent attendant at ridottos, masquerades, operas, and other amusements: but, in the midst of all, she maintained an unblemished character; evinced talents and virtues of an exceedingly high order; was received at court during each successive reign; and, to the day of her death, was honoured with the notice and confidence of George III. and his Queen Charlotte. Are we justified in inferring from the language employed in the postscript of the above letter, that Wesley was thinking of making Mary Granville (or rather Mrs. Pendarves) his wife? Or that there was some intrigue among his friends, to bring about an interview at Bath, and to initiate a correspondence which might ripen into something more than an ordinary intimacy between friends? A correspondence was now begun which lasted for four years, from August 1730 to July 1734. Mrs. Pendarves, however, remained in widowhood until 1743, when she married Dr. Delany. A few extracts, from some of Wesley's letters to this distinguished lady, may cast some light upon the questions we have ventured to suggest, and will also help to illustrate his character at this important period of his history.

"*November* 25, 1730.

"O that our friendship (since you give me leave to use that dear word) may be built on a firm foundation. For want of humility, I cannot follow you as I would. I must be left behind in the race of virtue. I am sick of pride: it quite weighs my spirit down. O, pray for me, that I may be healed. I have the greater dependence on your intercession, because you know what you ask. Every line of your last shows the heart of the writer, where, with friendship, dwells humility. Ours, dear Aspasia, it is to make acknowledgments; upon us lie the obligations of gratitude. If it be a fault to have too harmonious a soul, too exquisite a sense of elegant, generous transports, then, indeed, I must own there is an obvious fault both in Selina and Aspasia. If not, I fancy one may easily reconcile whatever they think or act to the strictest reason; unless it be their entertaining so favourable a thought of their most obliged and most faithful—CYRUS."

"*Innocents' Day*, 1730.

"Should one, who was as my own soul, be torn from me, it would be best for me. Surely if you were called first, mine eyes ought not to over-

flow because all tears were wiped away from yours. But I much doubt whether self-love would not be found too strong for a friendship, which I even now find to be less disinterested than I hitherto imagined. Is it a fault to desire to recommend myself to those who so strongly recommend virtue to me? Tell me, Aspasia,—tell me, Selina,—if it be a fault that my heart burns within me, when I reflect on the many marks of regard you have already shown."

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Aspasia made an inquiry of Wesley, couched in the following terms :—

"Every Sunday evening, a gentleman in this town has a concert of music. I am invited there to-night, and design to go. I charge you, on the friendship you have professed for me, to tell me your sincere opinion about it, and all your objections. For, if I am in error by going, you ought to prevent my doing so again."

Wesley replied :—

"Far be it from me to think that any circumstance of life shall ever give the enemy an advantage over Aspasia. He, who has overcome the world and its princes, shall give His angels charge over her to keep her in all her ways.

"To judge whether any action be lawful on the sabbath or no, we are to consider whether it advances the end for which the sabbath was ordained. Now, the end for which the sabbath was ordained is the attainment of holiness. Whatever, therefore, tends to advance this end is lawful on this day. Whatever does not tend to advance this end is not lawful on this day."

Mary Granville spent the summer of 1731 principally in London, and, to a great extent, in the family of Richard Colley, Esq., who, three years before, had succeeded to the estates of his cousin Garrett Wesley, Esq., of the county of Meath, and had assumed the name and arms of Wesley, and who, in 1746, was created Baron of Mornington. One day would be spent in boating upon the Thames, the Duchess of Ancaster affording them high amusement by singing, or rather catterwauling, a piece out of the "Beggars' Opera"; the next day in witnessing the working of her friend Wesley's orrery, and in representing Lady Shelburn at the baptism of a baby; another day in a jaunt to Greenwich. Then we find her attending court; and then sitting by the side of Hogarth, while painting a picture of the Wesley family, and obtaining a promise that he would give her instructions in drawing. In the midst of all this fashionable, fluttering

1731 kind of life, John Wesley, at Oxford, was writing her frequent
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Under the date of June 19, he says :—

"If Providence has used me as an instrument of doing any good to Aspasia, I had almost said, 'I have my reward.' The thought of having added anything to your ease will make many of my hours the happier. I am extremely glad to find you among those few who are yet concerned for the honour of their Master ; and cannot but congratulate you upon your wise choice. 'If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him.'"

A month later, he writes :—

"I have been charged with being *too strict ;* with carrying things too far in religion, and laying burdens upon myself, if not on others, which are neither necessary nor possible to be borne. Do not blame me, Aspasia, for using every means to find whether I am thus guilty or no ; and particularly for appealing to the judgment of one who, in this, is not likely to be prejudiced in my favour. Those among whom your lot is chiefly cast are not accused of too much strictness. Whatever other ill weeds may flourish there, a court is not a fit soil for these. Give me leave, then, to lay freely before you what my sentiments in this point are, and to conjure you to tell me which of them you disapprove."

By return of post, on July 21, Aspasia answers :—

"The imputation thrown upon you is a most extraordinary one. But such is the temper of the world, when you have no vice to feed their spleen with, they will condemn the highest virtue. O Cyrus, how noble a defence you make ! and how are you adorned with the beauty of holiness ! You really are in a state to be envied. How ardently do I wish to be as resigned and humble as yourself. As you say, my lot is fallen among those who cannot be accused of too much strictness in religion ; so far from that, they generally make an open profession of having no religion at all ; and I cannot observe my fellow creatures in such manifest danger without feeling an inexpressible concern."

Three days later, on July 24, Wesley writes :—

"I am extremely happy in having your approbation, where I am most careful to be approved. Give me the censure of the many, the praise of the few. I have all the advantages that outward circumstances can afford. *I* spend, day by day, many hours in those employments that have a direct tendency to improve me. *You* can rarely have one, wherein to pursue that great work with the full bent of your mind. *I* have scarce any acquaintance in the world, who is not either apt to teach or willing to learn. *You* are entangled among several who can plead for themselves little more than that they do no hurt. And would to God even that plea would hold ! I much fear it will not. Is it no hurt to rob you of your time, for which there is no equivalent but eternity ? Must Aspasia ever

submit to this insupportable misfortune? Every time a gay wretch wants to trifle away a part of that invaluable treasure which God has lent him, shall he force away also a part of hers? Surely there is a way to escape. The God whom you serve point it out to you!"[1] 1731 Age 28

Aspasia, in other words Mrs. Delany, spent the winter of 1731 in Ireland. On the 11th of March, 1732, writing to her sister from Dublin, she says:—

"Cyrus, by this time, has blotted me out of his memory, or, if he does remember me, it can only be to reproach me. What can I say for myself, in having neglected so extraordinary a correspondent? I only am the sufferer, but I should be very sorry to have him think my silence proceeded from negligence. I declare it is want of time."[2]

Twelve months after this, while still in Ireland, in another letter to her sister, she remarks:—

"As for the ridicule Cyrus has been exposed to, I do not at all wonder at it. Religion, in its plainest dress, suffers daily from the insolence and ignorance of the world; then how should that person escape, who dares to appear openly in its cause? He will meet with all the mortifications such rebels are able to give, which can be no other than that of finding them wilfully blinding themselves, and running headlong into the gulf of perdition; a melancholy prospect for the honest-hearted man who earnestly desires the salvation of his fellow-creatures."[3]

Here we close these specimens of correspondence. How are they to be interpreted? When begun, John Wesley was a young man, twenty-seven years of age, a fellow and tutor of a college, profoundly pious, and the leader of the Oxford Methodists. His fair correspondent was a young widow, only three years older than himself, the niece of Lord Lansdowne, opulent, talented, accomplished, beautiful, a favourite at court, and an intimate friend of the gentleman who had succeeded to the estates of Garrett Wesley, who had wished to make Wesley's brother Charles his heir.[4] Did Wesley correspond with Aspasia merely for the improvement of himself in piety and knowledge? And did she correspond with Wesley merely because she sympathised with the principles and practices of the Oxford Methodists? To say the least, this is extremely doubtful. Mary Granville was a talented and

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1863, p. 134, etc.
[2] "Autobiography of Mrs. Delany," vol. i., p. 343.
[3] Ibid. p. 410.
[4] Jackson's Life of C. Wesley, vol. i.. p. 11.

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accomplished woman, but, in that respect, Wesley was greatly her superior. She was moral, and, upon the whole, religious; but her life, among her aristocratic friends, was fluttering and empty when compared with the intensely religious life of Wesley and his friends at Oxford. The correspondence is a puzzle. There is nothing that is sickly or merely sentimental; but, on both sides, there is an endearment which perplexes. Was Wesley enamoured? And was he groping his way to something else than ordinary friendship? Did Mary Granville experience a reciprocity of feeling? And was the reproach, which began to be heaped upon the Oxford Methodists, the means of quenching it? We know not. But, supposing such conjectures to be true, what then? Was Wesley inconsistent with his principles, or unpardonably ambitious in longing for such an alliance? Or did Mary Granville at all demean herself in reciprocating Wesley's feelings? We think otherwise. Mary Granville ultimately married Patrick Delany, who, except that he had become rich by already marrying a wealthy widow, was, in no respect, the superior of John Wesley; and, in point of birth, was greatly his inferior; for, while the one was a son of an eminently learned clergyman of the Established Church, the other was the son of a servant to an Irish judge. The suspicions above mentioned are reasonable, though perhaps not true; and they naturally lead the contemplative reader to inquire, if Cyrus had married Aspasia, would Oxford Methodism have grown into what it afterwards became? If, to use Wesley's words, Charles Wesley had "a fair escape" when he declined to become Garrett Wesley's heir, had not Wesley himself "a fair escape" when his letters to the intimate friend of Garrett Wesley's successor ended as they did? This is an episode. We return to the Methodism of the Oxford Methodists.

In 1731, Wesley and his brother began the practice of conversing with each other in Latin when by themselves, and this they continued to the end of life. In the same year, a meeting was held by several of the senior graduates, to consult on the readiest way to stop the progress of the Methodist movement; and it was soon publicly reported that the censors were about to blow up the *Godly Club*. In April, Wesley, accompanied by his brother, set out on foot for Epworth; and,

after a three weeks' visit walked the same distance back, having made two discoveries: 1. That four or five and twenty miles is an easy and safe day's journey in hot weather as well as cold; and, 2. That it was easy to read as they walked, for a distance of ten or a dozen miles, without feeling either faint or weary. By this lengthened pedestrian tour they had been freed from all superfluous humours, and were not now in the slightest danger of an attack of gout. During their brief absence, however, their "little company" had "shrunk into almost none at all; for Mr. Morgan was sick at Holt; Mr. Boyce at his father's house at Barton; Mr. Kirkham was about to leave to become his uncle's curate; and another young gentleman of Christ Church had returned to the ways of the world, and studiously shunned their company."[1] 1731 Age 28

In August, Wesley, writing to one of his pupils, says:—

"You, who have not the assurance of a day to live, are not wise if you waste a moment. The shortest way to knowledge seems to be this: 1. To ascertain what knowledge you desire to attain. 2. To read no book which does not in some way tend to the attainment of that knowledge. 3. To read no book which does tend to the attainment of it, unless it be the best in its kind. 4. To finish one before you begin another. 5. To read them all in such order, that every subsequent book may illustrate and confirm the preceding."[2]

In the meantime Wesley had begun observing the Wednesday and Friday fasts, commonly observed in the ancient church, tasting no food whatever till three in the afternoon. Some of his friends had left him; but he still diligently strove against all kinds of sin; omitted no sort of self-denial which he thought lawful; carefully used, both in public and in private, all the means of grace; and embraced every opportunity of doing good.[3]

In 1732, he wrote a sermon on the sacrament of the Lord's supper, for the use of his pupils, in which he shows the duty of all Christians to communicate as often as they can. He asserts that, with "the first Christians, the Christian sacrifice was a constant part of the Lord's day service; and that, for

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., pp. 6, 11.
[2] *Methodist Magazine*, 1850, p. 1064.
[3] Wesley's Works, vol. i., p. 94.

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several centuries, they received it almost daily; four days a week always, and every saint's day besides." He further asserts that the Church of England has taken "all possible care that the sacrament be duly administered, wherever the Common-Prayer is read, every Sunday and holiday in the year"; and that those who do not receive it, at least thrice in a year, are liable to excommunication.[1]

In the same month (February) in which Wesley wrote his sermon, his mother addressed to him a letter from which we extract the following:—

"The young gentleman you mention seems to me to be in the right concerning the real presence of Christ in the sacrament. I own, I never understood by the *real presence* more than what he has elegantly expressed, that 'the Divine nature of Christ is then eminently present, to impart, by the operation of His Spirit, the benefits of His death to worthy receivers.' And surely, the Divine presence of our Lord, thus applying the virtue and merits of the great atonement to each true believer, makes the consecrated bread more than a sign of Christ's body; since, by His so doing, we receive not only the sign, but with it the thing signified—all the benefits of His incarnation and passion. But still, however this Divine institution may seem to others, to me it is full of mystery."[2]

To this Wesley replied as follows:—

"*February* 28, 1732.

"One consideration is enough to make me assent to your judgment concerning the holy sacrament; which is, that we cannot allow Christ's human nature to be present in it, without allowing either con- or transubstantiation. But that His Divinity is so united to us then, as He never is but to worthy receivers, I firmly believe, though the manner of that union is utterly a mystery to me."[3]

Such was the sacramentarian theory of the high church Oxford Methodists in 1732.

In the same letter, Wesley introduces another subject, showing that, after all, his earnest piety was not unmixed with morbidness. He continues:—

"To all who give signs of their not being strangers to the mind of Christ, I propose this question,—and why not to you rather than any? shall I quite break off my pursuit of all learning but what immediately tends to practice? I once desired to make a fair show in language and philosophy; but it is past; there is a more excellent way; and, if I cannot

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1787, p. 229, etc. [2] Ibid. 1844, p. 818.
[3] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 12.

attain to any progress in the one, without throwing up all thoughts of the other, why, fare it well! Yet a little while, and we shall all be equal in knowledge, if we are in virtue." 1732 Age 29

This was simply silly and absurd; for, on the same principle, a man ought to give up business, because business does not "immediately tend to the practice of piety."

It has been already stated that, during Wesley's brief visit to Epworth, in 1731, the Oxford Methodists were greatly scattered. In the spring of 1732, their forces were recruited by the adhesion of Mr. Clayton, and Mr. Broughton, and half-a-dozen pupils belonging to himself, his brother, and Mr. Clayton. Six evenings every week were spent, from six to nine o'clock, partly in reading and considering the Greek Testament, and partly in close conversation.[1]

In the month of July, Wesley, being in London, paid a visit to the Rev. William Law, at Putney, and commenced a friendship which lasted for several years. From this period, he began to read the "Theologia Germanica," and other mystic writings, with what results will be seen hereafter. On the 3rd of August, he was made a member of "The Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge;" and, during his stay in London, received from Mr. Clayton a long letter, which will help to give the reader an insight into the difficulties and daily life of the Oxford Methodists. It was first published in the *Wesleyan Times* newspaper, of September 24, 1866.

"OXON, *August* 1, 1732.

"REV. AND DEAR SIR,—I cannot but think it an extraordinary providence, that, when we had lost our best advocate and patron, all opposition against us should immediately cease. Since you left us, nobody has thought it worth while to attack either Mr. Smith or me, or to endeavour to remove us from those principles wherein you, by the grace of God, have fixed us. Mr. Smith goes out of town to-morrow, and so will be entirely out of danger from the fellows of Lincoln. He seems to be forearmed against the temptations which may possibly arise from strange company and from travelling. My little flock at Brazenose are, God be praised, true to their principles. Bocardo," [a room over the north gate of the city used as a debtors' prison,] "I fear, grows worse upon my hands: they have done nothing but quarrel ever since you left us. They carried matters so high on Saturday, that the bailiff was sent

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 288.

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for, who ordered Tomlyn to be fettered, and put into the dungeon. The Castle is, I thank God! in much better condition. All the felons were acquitted, except Salmon, who is to be tried at Warwick; and the sheep-stealer, who is burnt in the hand and is a great penitent. Jempro is discharged, and I have appointed Harris to read to the prisoners in his stead. Two of the felons likewise have paid their fees and are gone out, both of them able to read mighty well. There are only two in the gaol who want this accomplishment,—John Clanville, who reads but moderately, and the horse-stealer who cannot read at all, though he knows all his letters and can spell most of the monosyllables. I hear them both read three times a week; and, I believe, Salmon hears them so many times daily. The woman, who was a perfect novice, spells tolerably; and so does one of the boys; and the other makes shift to read with spelling every word that is longer than ordinary. They can both say their catechism to the end of the commandments, and can likewise repeat the morning and evening prayers for children in Ken's Manual. I have been twice at the school, namely, on Tuesday and Saturday last; and intend to go again as soon as I have finished this letter. The children all go on pretty well, except one, who, I find, truants till eleven o'clock in a morning. I have obtained leave to go to St. Thomas's workhouse twice a week. I am sure the people much need instruction, for there is hardly a soul can read in the whole house. Pray, do not forget a few Common-Prayer Books for the Castle.

"You cannot imagine the pleasure it is for me to know that you are engaged every morning in prayer for me. I wish for nine o'clock more eagerly than ever I did before; and, I think, I begin to perceive what is meant by that union of souls which is so much talked of in Pere Malebranche and Madam Bourignon. Mr. Hall is not yet come home; so that I am pretty much taken up with the poor people and the prisoners. I thank God, I have fully conquered my affection for a morning nap, and rise constantly by five o'clock, and have the pleasure to see myself imitated by the greatest part of my pupils. I have made Mr. Clements a proselyte to early rising, though I cannot to constant communion. May God prosper all your designs of doing good in London.

"I am, Rev. and dear Sir,

"Your affectionate friend and obedient humble servant,

"J. CLAYTON."

The lull in the opposition to the Oxford Methodists was of short continuance. A month after the date of Mr. Clayton's letter, Wesley had to mourn the death of his friend Morgan, and to defend himself against the accusation that Morgan had hastened his death by the rigorous fasting, which he had practised at Wesley's recommendation.[1] Wesley's long letter fully satisfied Morgan's father, who expressed himself as

[1] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. i., pp. 190, 191.

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almost wishing to be one of the Oxford Methodists himself, and as ready to vindicate them from any calumny or aspersion that might be cast upon them.[1] There were others, however, of a different mind, for a fortnight after Mr. Morgan wrote thus to Wesley, an article appeared in *Fogg's Weekly Journal*, to the effect that there were, in the Oxford University, a number of persons who, in order "to live up to the principles of Christianity had doomed themselves to absurd and perpetual melancholy;" and that "these sons of sorrow designed to make the whole place a monastery." The writer continues: "These Methodists pretend to great refinements, as well as to what regards the speculative, as the practical part of religion; and have a very near affinity to the Essenes among the Jews, and the Pietists in Switzerland. The chief hinge, on which their whole scheme of religion turns, is, that no action whatever is indifferent; and hence they condemn several actions as bad, which are not only allowed to be innocent, but laudable, by the rest of mankind. They avoid, as much as possible, every object that may affect them with any pleasant or grateful sensations. All social entertainments and diversions are disapproved of; and, in endeavouring to avoid luxury, they not only exclude what is convenient, but what is absolutely necessary for the support of life; fancying, (as is thought,) that religion was designed to contradict nature. They neglect and voluntarily afflict their bodies, and practise several rigorous and superstitious customs, which God never required of them. All Wednesdays and Fridays are strictly to be kept as fasts; and blood let once a fortnight, to keep down the carnal man. At dinner, they sigh for the time they are obliged to spend in eating. Every morning to rise at four o'clock, is supposed a duty; and to employ two hours a day in singing of psalms and hymns, is judged an indispensable requisite to the being a Christian. In short, they practise everything contrary to the judgment of other persons, and allow none to have any (religion) but those of their own sect, which is the farthest from it.

"As these Methodists have occasioned no small stir in Oxford, so there has not been wanting a variety of conject-

[1] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 194.

1733 Age 30 ures about them. Some are apt to ascribe their gloomy and disconsolate way of life to want of money; thus being denied the enjoyment of those pleasures they chiefly desire, they are weighed down by an habitual sorrow; and it is certain that their founder took formerly no small liberty in indulging his appetites. Others tax their characters with hypocrisy, and suppose them to use religion only as a veil to vice; and, indeed, if we should give credit to the several tales related of them, their greatest friends would be ashamed to stand in their defence. Others judge that their way of life is owing to enthusiasm, madness, and superstitious scruples. Among their own party, they pass for religious persons, and men of extraordinary parts; but they have the misfortune to be taken by all, who have ever been in their company, for madmen and fools."

Such are some of the scandalous charges contained in this precious epistolary morsel,—we believe the first attack ever made upon the Methodists in the public prints. The entire letter is before us; but only a part of it is quoted,—first because there is a great amount of empty and ungrammatical verbiage unworthy of being admitted into what was, at that period, perhaps the most literary and respectable paper published—*Fogg's Weekly Journal;* and secondly because there is one paragraph, which, despite its verbosity, is so loathsomely impure, that it would be a sin against both God and man to reproduce it.

The letter was published in *Fogg's Journal*, on December 9th, 1732; and, within two months after, it was answered in an octavo pamphlet of thirty pages, entitled, "The Oxford Methodists: Being some account of a society of young gentlemen in that city, so denominated; setting forth their rise, views, and designs; in a letter from a gent, near Oxford, to his friend in London. Printed for J. Roberts, price 6*d.*" The second edition of this first defence of Methodism, published in 1738 "with very great alterations and improvements," is that from which the following extracts are taken.

The writer says that he knew nothing of the Methodists till his friend requested him to make inquiry concerning them. On doing this, he was first of all told that they were "miserable enthusiasts and zealots;" and he found that almost

every one, with whom he conversed, had a prejudice against them; and yet, notwithstanding this, he was unable to learn that the least slur had been cast upon their moral behaviour, except that "they pretended to be more pious than their neighbours," and that "they put a gloomy and melancholy face upon religion, and affected greater austerities and exemplariness than the doctrines of the gospel demanded." 1733 Age 30

The writer continues; after he "had heard all that could be said against them by their enemies," he "thought it was but fair to inquire of their friends what could be said in their favour." He found it, however, difficult to meet with any who would acknowledge himself to be a friend; and hence he was obliged to seek his information from one of the Methodists themselves. It is probable that Wesley was the Methodist thus consulted; but, be that as it may, a full account was given of the origin of Methodism at the end of the year 1729, and of its progress to the present time. The writer adds: "The gentleman assured me, that they" (the Methodists) "were so diffident of themselves, especially when they found a spirit of contemptuous raillery stirred up against them, that they took advice from time to time of a worthy and venerable gentleman, a near relation of one of them, who had much knowledge and experience of the world; and that they formed their conduct upon his advice; and, upon the encouragement he gave them, they were determined, at all events, to persevere in the course they had begun."

The "near relation," referred to in this extract, was Wesley's father; and the extract is of vast importance as tending to confirm the opinion that the "father of the Wesleys"—the noble-hearted rector of Epworth—deserves more credit for the organisation and establishment of Oxford Methodism than the Methodists and the Church have ever yet awarded him. Several of his "encouraging epistles" were shown to the inquiring writer of the pamphlet before us, and gave him "a high notion of the piety and good sense of the venerable author." "How happy," he writes, "are these sacramentarians, these Methodists, these enthusiasts, as their enemies call them, to have so very excellent a director! and how much are they to be commended for submitting their conduct and designs to so pious and experienced a judge."

1733 Age 30 He then proceeds: "There are three points to which these gentlemen think themselves obliged to adhere—1. That of visiting and relieving the prisoners and the sick, and giving away Bibles, Common-Prayer Books, and the 'Whole Duty of Man'; and of explaining the catechism to the children of poor families, and of dropping a shilling or so to such families where they deem it needful. 2. That of weekly communion. 3. That of observing strictly the fasts of the Church, which has caused some to call them 'Supererogation Men.'"

After this, the writer proceeds to notice the accusations contained in the letter published in *Fogg's Weekly Journal*, and, as far as necessary, replies to them.

Such is an outline of the first defence of Methodism ever published.

Wesley, in 1733, composed two sermons full of a great doctrine, which had well-nigh been forgotten—the absolute need of the influences of the Holy Ghost to convert the soul. It is a gross mistake to imagine that this, with its cognate truths, was not discovered and embraced by Wesley until his meeting with Peter Bohler in 1738. Take the following extracts from the first of the sermons above mentioned, and which was preached at St. Mary's, Oxford, before the university, on January 1st, 1733.[1]

"The circumcision of the heart is that habitual disposition of soul, which, in the sacred writings, is termed holiness; and which directly implies the being cleansed from sin, from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit; and, by consequence, the being endued with those virtues which were also in Christ Jesus; the being so renewed in the image of our mind, as to be perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect."

Here we have propounded, in the plainest terms, as early as the year 1733, Wesley's famous doctrine of Christian perfection. "This sermon," said he, in 1765, "contained all that I now teach concerning salvation from all sin, and loving God with an undivided heart."[2]

In the same sermon he tells us that, "without the Spirit of God we can do nothing but add sin to sin; it being as

[1] The text was Romans ii. 29; and the title of the sermon, "The Circumcision of the Heart."

[2] Wesley's Works, vol. iii., p. 202.

impossible for us even to think a good thought without His supernatural assistance, as to create ourselves, or to renew our whole souls in righteousness and true holiness. He alone can quicken those who are dead unto God, and breathe into them the breath of Christian life." 1733 Age 30

We are further taught that this holiness of heart is to be obtained "alone by faith, which is not only an unshaken assent to all that God hath revealed in Scripture, but in particular to those important truths,—'Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners,'—'He bare our sins in His own body on the tree,'—'He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.'"

Then follows: "Those who are thus, by faith, born of God, have also strong consolation through hope. This is the next thing which the circumcision of the heart implies; even the testimony of their own spirit, with the Spirit which witnesses in their hearts, that they are the children of God."

Then, as if intended to answer one of the false accusations which had appeared in *Fogg's Weekly Journal* only three weeks before, and to justify one of the practices there condemned, he tells his reverend and learned auditors that this heart religion "does not forbid us, as some have strangely imagined, to take pleasure in anything but God; to suppose this, is to suppose the Fountain of holiness is directly the author of sin; since He has inseparably annexed pleasure to the use of those creatures which are necessary to sustain the life He has given us." But, at the same time, "every good soldier of Christ will not only renounce the works of darkness, but every appetite too, and every affection, which is not subject to the law of God. Vain hope! that a child of Adam should ever expect to see the kingdom of Christ and of God, without striving, without agonising first, to enter in at the strait gate,—without a constant and continued course of general self-denial."

"This," adds Wesley, "is God's short and plain account of true religion and virtue. Other sacrifices from us He would not; but the living sacrifice of the heart He hath chosen. Let it be continually offered up to God through Christ, in flames of holy love. And let no creature be suffered to share

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with Him; for He is a jealous God. His throne will He not divide with another; He will reign without a rival. Be no design, no desire admitted there, but what has Him for its ultimate object. This is the way wherein those children of God once walked, who, being dead, still speak to us."[1]

Such then were the principles held by Wesley and the Oxford Methodists, in 1733. From these he never varied; and dark will be the day when they are either abandoned or forgotten by his followers.

The other sermon, written in 1733, was founded upon the text, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." Here again we are told that the Holy Spirit "is the great Fountain of holiness to His church. From Him flows all the grace and virtue, by which the stains of guilt are cleansed, and we are renewed in all holy dispositions, and again bear the image of our Creator. He is the immediate Minister of God's will upon earth, and transacts all the great affairs of the church of Christ."[2]

Precious truths are truths like these. Without them the church, no matter how learned, rich, respectable, and ritualistic, is utterly powerless in converting men. With them, nothing is impossible; for, in such a case, the church has, for the accomplishment of its purposes, not only the resources of man, but the omnipotence of God.

In the same year, 1733, Wesley issued his first printed production, "A Collection of Forms of Prayer for every day in the Week." These prayers were originally intended for the use of his college pupils; but the reader may also gather from them some of the principles and aims of the Oxford Methodists.

They longed for the love of God to be the sole actuating power in the use they made of their understanding, affections, senses, health, time, and talents; that God might always be present to their minds; that they might ever have awful thoughts of Him, and never mention His holy and reverend name, unless on just, solemn, and devout occasions; nor even then, without acts of adoration; and that they might glorify Him by every thought of their hearts, every word of their

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. v., p. 190.
[2] *Methodist Magazine*, 1798, p. 607.

tongues, and every work of their hands, and by professing His truth, even to the death, if it should please Him to call them to it. 1733 Age 30

They wished to be made all kindness and benignity, all goodness and gentleness, all meekness and longsuffering; and to be filled with the whole spirit of humility, and to have it the constant, ruling habit of their minds. They dreaded applause, and desired never to speak a word that might tend to their own praise, unless the good of others required it. They endeavoured to abstain from all pleasures which did not prepare them for taking pleasure in God.

They acted upon the principle of excluding none from their charity, who were the objects of God's mercy. They embraced all occasions to assist the needy, to protect the oppressed, to instruct the ignorant, to confirm the wavering, to exhort the good, and to reprove the wicked. They wished to look upon the failings of their neighbours as if they were their own; and never revealed them but when charity required, and then with tenderness and compassion.

Space forbids further reference to these prayers. Suffice it to say that, for reverential feeling, simplicity and beauty of expression, scriptural sentiment, Christian benevolence, and earnest longings for the highest holiness; for adoration, penitence, deprecation, petition, thanksgiving, and intercession,—they have no superiors, perhaps hardly any equals, in the English language. They are little known, and less used; but would be of great service to thousands of Methodists, if sometimes employed as an aid in their private devotions.

In January, 1733, Wesley set out on horseback for Epworth, to see his father, whose health was failing; and, on his way, had a narrow escape, by his horse falling over a bridge, not far from Daventry. His parents suggested to him the propriety of using means to obtain the Epworth living; but he was deterred from acquiescing in the proposal, by a conviction that, "if he could stand his ground at Oxford, and approve himself a faithful minister of Christ, through evil report and good report, there was no place under heaven where he was so likely to make improvement in every good work."[1]

[1] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 204.

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In May, he again went to Epworth, visiting, on the way, his friend Clayton, at Manchester, where he spent a sabbath, and preached thrice, in three different churches. On his return to Oxford, in June, he found the ill effects of his absence; for three of his own pupils and the whole of Mr. Clayton's had abandoned the Methodists; and, instead of finding seven-and-twenty communicants at St. Mary's, he now found not more than five. His friends were deserting him, and his enemies triumphing over him; but, in the midst of all, he stood unmoved. "My friends," says he, "were either trifling or serious: if triflers, fare them well; a noble escape: if serious, those who are more serious are left, whom the others would rather have opposed than forwarded in the service they have done, and still do, us. As for reputation, though it be a glorious instrument of advancing our Master's service, yet there is a better than that—a clean heart, a single eye, a soul full of God."[1] "The thing that gives offence here is the being singular with regard to time, expense, and company. Ill men say all manner of evil of me, and good men believe them. There is a way, and there is but one, of making my peace. God forbid I should ever take it. I have as many pupils as I need, and as many friends; when more are better for me, I shall have more. If I have no more pupils after these are gone from me, I shall then be glad of a curacy near you; if I have, I shall take it as a signal to remain here. What I do is this; when I am entrusted with a person who is first to understand and practise, and then to teach, the law of Christ, I endeavour to show him what that law is. When he appears seriously sensible of this, I propose to him the means God hath commanded him to use, in order to that end; and a week, or a month, or a year after, as the state of his soul seems to require it, the several prudential means recommended by wise and good men. Only two rules it is my principle to observe in all cases; first, to begin, continue, and end all my advices in the spirit of meekness; and secondly, to add to meekness long suffering; in pursuance of a rule which I fixed long since, never to give up any one till I have tried him at least ten years."[2]

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 7. [2] Ibid. vol. xii., p. 14.

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These are significant facts. Methodism at Oxford was organised in 1729. Two years after, while Wesley and his brother were at Epworth, it dwindled into almost nothing; and two years later still, when it had increased to seven-and-twenty communicants, during another brief Epworth visit it was almost utterly destroyed, for the seven-and-twenty were reduced to five. All this goes to show that Wesley was the soul of this mighty movement, and that without him it would have been dissolved and become extinct.

It is far from certain that the seven-and-twenty communicants, just mentioned, were all collegians. On the contrary, there is strong presumptive proof that they were not; and, indeed, that some of them were ladies. One of them seems to have been Miss Potter, probably the bishop's daughter, concerning whom Clayton writes to Wesley, in a letter dated "Manchester, September 10, 1733," as follows:—

"Poor Miss Potter! I wonder not that she is fallen. Where humility is not the foundation, the superstructure cannot be good. And yet I am sorry to hear the tidings of her, especially that she has a great man for her confessor, who dissuades her from constant communion. I am sure she has great occasion to use all the means of grace which Providence provides for her. I would not persuade you to leave off reading with her. Who knows whether you may not raise her again to the eminence from which she has fallen? At least, though she neglect the weightier matters of the law, yet keep up in her that reverend respect she bears it, even by the 'tithing of mint and anise and cummin.'"[1]

Whether there were other ladies besides this one, included in the seven-and-twenty Methodist communicants, it is impossible to say; but none were included in the five. The five poor Methodists remaining, not reckoning Wesley himself, nor Morgan who was dead, nor Clayton who was removed to Manchester, nor Whitelamb who was gone to Wroote, were doubtless Charles Wesley, Benjamin Ingham[2] and James Hervey (both of whom joined them in 1733), John Gambold, and, probably, Charles Kinchin. All honour to such names! They kept the fire burning when it was in danger of going out. Wesley was their master spirit; but they were faithful and willing co-workers.

[1] See original letter in *Wesleyan Times*, Oct. 1, 1866.

[2] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 288; and Brown's "Memoirs of Hervey," p. 2.

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Mr. Clayton, in the letter just quoted, refers to confession and to constant communion. Did the Oxford Methodists recommend confession? It would seem they did; hence the following extract from a long, unpublished letter, written at this period, and addressed to Wesley, by his sister Emily:—

"To lay open the state of my soul to you, or any of our clergy, is what I have no inclination to at present; and, I believe, I never shall. I shall not put my conscience under the direction of mortal man, frail as myself. To my own master I stand or fall. Nay, I scruple not to say, that all such desire in you, or any other ecclesiastic, seems to me like church tyranny, and assuming to yourselves a dominion over your fellow-creatures, which was never designed you by God. . . . I farther own that I do not hold frequent communion necessary to salvation, nor a means of christian perfection. But do not mistake my meaning; I only think communing every Sunday, or very frequently, lessens our veneration for that sacred ordinance, and, consequently, our profiting by it."

Two other extracts from letters, belonging to this period, may be useful as illustrative of Oxford Methodism. In the month of July, 1733, Mr. Clayton, then resident in Manchester, wrote to Wesley as follows:—

"As to your question about Saturday, I can only answer it by giving an account of how I spend the day. I do not look upon it as a preparation for Sunday, but as a festival itself; and, therefore, I have continued festival prayer, for the three primitive hours, and for morning and evening, from the Apostolical Constitutions, which, I think, I communicated to you whilst I was at Oxford. I look upon Friday as my preparation for the celebration of both the sabbath and the Lord's day; the first of which I observe much like a common saint's day, or as one of the inferior holidays of the Church. I have, I bless God! generally contrived to have the eucharist celebrated on Saturdays as well as other holidays, for the use of myself and the sick people whom I visit.

"I was at Dr. Deacon's when your letter came to hand, and we had a deal of talk about your scheme of avowing yourselves as a society, and fixing upon a set of rules. The Doctor seemed to think you had better let it alone; for to what end would it serve? It would be no additional tie upon yourselves; and perhaps would be a snare for the consciences of those weak brethren who might chance to come among you. Observing the stations" [the fast on Wednesdays and Fridays] "and weekly communion are duties which stand upon a much higher footing than a rule of society; and they who can set aside the command of God and the authority of the Church will hardly, I doubt, be tied by the rules of a private society.

"As to the mixture" [of water with sacramental wine] "Mr. Colley told me it was constantly used at Christ Church. However, if you have reason to doubt it, I would have you inquire; but I cannot think the want

of it a reason for not communicating. If I could receive where the mixture was used, I would; and, therefore, I used to prefer the Castle to Christ Church; but if not I should not think myself any further concerned in the matter than as it might be in my power to get it restored."[1] 1733 — Age 30

Again, in another letter, dated "Manchester, September 10, 1733," Mr. Clayton writes:—

"How should I direct my instructor in the school of Christ! However, I must be free to tell you my sentiments of what you inquire about. On Wednesdays and Fridays I have, for some time past, used the Office for Passion Week, out of Spinckes's Devotions, and bless God for it. I have found it very useful to excite in me that love of God, and that sorrow for having offended Him, which make up the first main branch of repentance. Refer your last question to Mr. Law; I dare not give directions for spending that time which I consume in bed, nor teach you, who rise at four, when I indulge myself in sleep till five."[2]

These are important letters, not only as exhibiting the religious earnestness of Wesley and his friends, but as affording a glimpse of the high churchism of the Oxford Methodists. Wesley seriously contemplated the formation of a society, who should strictly observe saint days, holidays, and Saturdays, besides other ritualistic practices, down to superstitious admixture of sacramental wine with water. In truth, these were ardent spirits. Visiting prisons, and teaching children; rising at five every morning; praying for each other and for their friends; and observing the weekly communion, are things which all will regard with commendation: but the other were silly, popish practices, not only unauthorised and useless, but too much resembling the pernicious nonsense of the high church party of the present day to receive the approval of those who have learned to be thankful for the inestimable blessings of the great Protestant reformation.

The health of Wesley's father was now extremely feeble; and it became an anxiously discussed family question whether Wesley should be his father's successor. Samuel was first urged to use means to obtain the next presentation of the Epworth rectory; but he positively declined doing so, and directed his father's attention to John. The correspondence

[1] *Wesleyan Times*, April 8, 1861.
[2] *Methodist Magazine*, 1848, p. 892.

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on this subject extends over the whole of the year 1734. The Epworth living was valuable, as may be judged by the fact that, though then worth only £200 per annum, it is now, through the relative changes that have taken place in the value of money and the price of food, worth near £1000.[1] The dying rector had been at great expense in improving the parsonage and its premises. Here he had diligently and faithfully laboured as an earnest parish minister for nearly forty successive years. Here most of his nineteen children had been born. Here he was about to die himself; and here he was anxious that his wife should die. John was pressed to secure the living, and thereby secure a continuance of the old homestead for his mother and his unmarried sisters. His brother Samuel allowed that at Oxford he would have "more friends, more freedom from care, and more Divine ordinances than he could have elsewhere;" but then at Oxford he was "despised," and therefore could "do no good there." To this John answered: "1. A Christian will be despised anywhere. 2. No one is a Christian till he is despised. 3. His being despised will not hinder his doing good, but much further it, by making him a better Christian. 4. Another can supply my place at Epworth better than at Oxford, and the good done here is of a far more diffusive nature; inasmuch as it is a more extensive benefit to sweeten the fountain than to do the same to particular streams."[2]

In writing to his father, he put the case thus: "The question is not whether I could do more good to others there or here; but whether I could do more good to myself: seeing wherever I can be most holy myself, there I can most promote holiness in others. But I can improve myself more at Oxford than at any other place," etc.

To this his father properly replied that our main consideration in choosing a course of life "is not dear self, but the glory of God, and the different degrees of promoting it."[3]

John agreed to this; but argued that "that course of life tends most to the glory of God, wherein we can most promote holiness in ourselves and others;" and that at Oxford he had

[1] "Life and Times of S. Wesley," p. 441.
[2] Priestley's Letters, p. 44.
[3] Ibid. p. 48.

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several advantages for doing this which were almost peculiar to the place. 1. He could always have at hand half-a-dozen friends, nearly of his own judgment, and engaged in the same studies; persons who had wholly and absolutely devoted themselves to God, and who denied themselves and took up their cross daily. 2. He could not only have as much, but as little company as he pleased; for he had no trifling visitors, except about an hour in a month, when he invited some of the fellows to breakfast. 3. He was entirely free from worldly cares, for his income was ready for him on stated days, and all he had to do was to count it and carry it home. 4. He had the privilege of public prayer twice a day, and of weekly communion. 5. At Oxford there was room for charity in all its forms; poor families to be relieved; children to be educated; workhouses and prisons to be visited; and the schools of the prophets, where tender minds were to be formed and strengthened. 6. He had the joint advice of many friends in any difficulty that might arise; the good bishop and vice-chancellor to supply his want of experience; and a fund, which this year would amount to near £80, to supply the bodily wants of the poor, and thereby prepare their souls to receive instruction. In addition to all this, he alleges that the care of two thousand souls at Epworth would crush him; and that, were he to abandon all his Oxford advantages, he would not be able to stand his ground for a single month against intemperance in sleeping, eating, and drinking; against irregularity in study; against a general lukewarmness in his affections, and remissness in his actions; against softness and self-indulgence, directly opposite to that discipline and hardship which become a soldier of Jesus Christ.[1]

The letter from which the above is taken is dated December 10, 1734. His brother Samuel wrote a fortnight later, saying that his father had told him John was unalterably resolved not to accept the living, even if he could get it. Samuel protests against the decision, and says that in Wesley's arguments he can see his love to himself, but he cannot see his love to his neighbour. Besides, he was not at liberty to resolve against undertaking a cure of souls, having been

[1] Priestley's Letters, p. 21.

1734 Age 31 solemnly engaged to do this at his ordination. Charles might be silly enough to vow he would not depart from Oxford, and thereby avoid orders; but the faith of John was already plighted to the contrary; and the idea scarce ever entered the head of any Christian but his own, that a parish priest cannot attain to the highest perfection possible on this side heaven.[1]

Wesley's reasons and arguments were doubtless well intended; but they were feeble, sophistical, and inconclusive. It is easy to imagine that they would be painful both to his father and family; and it seems impossible to excuse them except upon the ground that God had elected him for another kind of work, and that by an unseen power he was prevented realising his father's wishes. Wesley's father died April 25, 1735, and the Epworth living passed into other hands; but before proceeding farther, we give the last letter Wesley received from him.

The venerable rector was now anxiously employed in the publication of his grand folio volume of 600 pages, "*Dissertationes in Librum Jobi*," and had requested his son to assist him with the engravings for it.

"EPWORTH, *January* 21, 1735.

"DEAR SON,—About an hour since, your letter of the 13th instant came to hand, and indeed not before I had need of it, especially when I considered how extremely weak I was, and found myself grow sensibly weaker every day. My people have been very kind to me during my long illness, which has brought me now so low that I cannot walk half-a-dozen times about my chamber; but then I am often refreshed with seeing Mr. Hale's noble present of books to me lying in my window, near half of which I have already spread in my parish, some to those who came to see me, and to others I have sent them, and with very good effect, many having read them, and some lent them to others. A spirit of Christianity, beyond what I have hitherto known, seems to be raised among them; one proof of which is in the greater frequency of the sacraments. Nor is Mr. Whitelamb wanting in any part of his duty, though I am not able to preach or give the sacrament to them myself, except one day, and that with his assistance.

"And now let us go on to matter of less moment, though I hope not quite frivolous. Had I had all Mr. Rivington's advice at first, all my plates and cuts would have been done before this, and that with less expense, and to

[1] Priestley's Letters, p. 17.

greater perfection. The agreement you have made with the engraver seems to be very reasonable. Whether the cuts are to be done on sheets or half sheets I leave to you and Mr. Rivington; but I would have leviathan's rival, that is, the whale, as well as the crocodile. As for the elephant, he is so common that he need not be added. I am glad the tombs want no more than retouching, and especially that Mr. Garden is not ill pleased with them. 'Job in Adversity' I leave to your direction, as likewise the frontispiece, which Mr. Virtue is doing, who now duns me pretty hard for money for it; and I have writ him lately to send me word what he will charge for the whole when it is finished, and what he desires in part, with a promise to send him some money by the first opportunity I have of doing it. As for poor Pentapolis, it must even shift as it can, though my heart is pretty much in it, and I have taken a little pains about it. This I must likewise leave with you; but cannot you send me a copy of the drawings before they are engraven, that I may weigh them, as is proper? As for Job's horse, I cannot for my life imagine how I shall get him into my Lord Oxford's stable,—I mean, get liberty to inscribe it to him, unless you yourself would speak to my Lord Duplin about it. Have you yet found any news of '*De Morbo Jobi*,' which has been so long incognito? Or, is there anything else that you find wanting? I heartily commend you and your brother to God, and am this evening

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"Your affectionate father,

"SAMUEL WESLEY."[1]

Wesley endorsed this characteristic letter from his father with the words, "The last I received from him." Thirteen weeks afterwards, the venerable man rested from his cares and earthly labours.

On June 11, 1734, Wesley preached before the university what his brother Charles calls "his Jacobite sermon," for which he was "much mauled and threatened." He was prudent enough, however, before preaching it, to get the vice-chancellor to read and approve of it, and hence was able to set "Wadham, Merton, Exeter, and Christ Church" objectors at defiance.

He then set out for Epworth, accompanied by Westley Hall, who proposed marriage to his sister Keziah, greatly to the satisfaction of all the parties concerned, except Hall's own mother. On his return to Oxford, he spent some time in London, chiefly in consulting Mr. Law about one of his pupils, referred to in Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 46; but

[1] *Wesleyan Times*, Jan. 14, 1866.

1734 Age 31 also partly in putting through the press his father's "Dissertations on the Book of Job."[1]

About the same period, he began the practice of reading as he rode on horseback,—a practice he continued nearly forty years. He also made frequent excursions to different parts of the country, often on foot; and, during the year, walked more than a thousand miles, constantly preaching on the sabbath, and already acting the part of an itinerant. His walking, preaching, reading, studying, visiting, and fasting began to affect his health; he lost his strength, and frequently spat blood.[2] On the 16th of July, while asleep in bed, he had such an attack of bleeding as led him to exclaim: "O God, prepare me for Thy coming, and then come when Thou wilt!" His friends became alarmed; and his mother wrote letters blaming him for neglecting his health. A physician was called in, his advice adopted, and gradually the well worn devotee regained his lost vigour.[3]

Though Wesley's letter to his father, dated December 10, 1734, seemed to decide the question respecting his seeking to obtain the Epworth living, his brother Samuel, during the correspondence arising out of it, started an idea which, ghost like, haunted Wesley for months afterwards, and which, we incline to think, had considerable influence in inducing him to change his views, and ultimately to go to Georgia.

Samuel, on Christmas-day, 1734, wrote as follows:—"You are not at liberty to resolve against undertaking a cure of souls. You are solemnly engaged to do it before God, and His high-priest, and His Church. Are you not ordained? Did you not deliberately and openly promise to instruct, to teach, to admonish, to exhort those committed to your charge? Did you equivocate then with so vile a reservation, as to purpose in your heart that you would never have a charge? It is not a college, it is not an university; it is the *order of the Church*, according to which you were called."[4]

This was touching Wesley in a tender place. On conscientious grounds, he had already refused to apply for the

[1] Priestley's Letters, p. 16. [2] Benson's "Apology," pp. 30–32.
[3] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 208.
[4] Priestley's Letters, p. 18.

Epworth living; and yet here his brother Samuel maintains that on conscientious grounds, he is bound not to bury himself at Oxford, but to undertake a cure of souls, either at Epworth or somewhere else. His faith is plighted. Before God and His Church he has sworn to be, not a tutor, but a minister of Christ. What was the effect of this? In December, 1734, Wesley refused to apply for his father's living; and yet, ten months afterwards, he left Oxford and set sail to Georgia. What occurred during this brief interval? 1735 Age 32

In January, 1735, Wesley wrote to Samuel, saying:—"I do not, nor ever did, resolve against undertaking a cure of souls. There are four cures belonging to our college, and consistent with a fellowship. I do not know but I may take one of them at Michaelmas. Not that I am clearly assured that I should be false to my engagement, were I only to instruct and exhort the pupils committed to my charge. But of that I should think more. I desire your full thoughts upon the whole, as well as your prayers."[1]

To this Samuel replied, February 8, 1735:—"*The order of the Church* stakes you down, and the more you struggle you will be held the faster. If there be such a thing as truth, I insist upon it, you must, when opportunity offers, either perform that promise, or repent of it."[2]

In answer, five days afterwards, John remarked:—"Your last argument is either *ignoratio elenchi*, or implies these two propositions: 1. 'You resolve against any parochial cure of souls.' 2. 'The priest who does not undertake the first parochial cure that offers is perjured.' Let us add a third: 'The tutor who, being in orders, never accepts of a parish is perjured.' And then I deny all three."[3]

Samuel's reply was as follows:—"An ordained tutor, who accepts not a cure, is perjured; alter the term into 'who resolves not to accept,' and I will maintain it, unless you can prove either of these two: (1) there is no such obligation at taking orders; (2) this obligation is dispensed with. Both which I utterly deny."[4]

On the 4th of March John replied:—"I had rather dispute

[1] Priestley's Letters, p. 20. [2] Ibid. p. 43. [3] Ibid. p. 45. [4] Ibid. p. 47.

1735 Age 32 with you, if I must dispute, than with any man living; because it may be done with so little expense of time and words. You think I engaged myself at my ordination to undertake the cure of a parish. I think I did not. However, I own I am not the proper judge of the oath I then took; accordingly, the post after I received yours, I referred it to 'the high-priest of God,' before whom I contracted that engagement, proposing this single question to him,—Whether I had, at my ordination, engaged myself to undertake the cure of a parish or no. His answer runs in these words: 'It doth not seem to me that, at your ordination, you engaged yourself to undertake the cure of any parish, provided you can, as a clergyman, better serve God and His Church in your present or some other station.' Now, that I can, as a clergyman, better serve God and His Church in my present station, I have all reasonable evidence."[1]

Wesley's father died within two months after this; and yet, during this short interval, Wesley seems to have been induced to lay aside his scruples and to apply for the Epworth living. He applied, but he was not successful. This is a bold assertion to be made in the teeth of statements directly opposite; statements made and repeated and re-repeated, without dispute, for more than the last seventy years: but before the reader rejects it, let him ponder the significance of the following letter, written by Wesley's friend, Broughton, and published, for the first time, in the *Wesleyan Times*, of October 28, 1861:—

"LONDON, *April* 15, 1735.

"REV. AND DEAR SIR,—The same evening I received the favour of yours, I waited on St. John, promising myself a kind reception. He rejoiced with me to hear that your father was yet alive; but did not close readily with me in attempting what, if crowned with success, might prove a means of making our declining friend end his days in peace. What shall we say for so sudden, so unwished for a change? Oh, put not your trust in princes! St. John disowns his giving me any encouragement to promise you hopes of success. Did I then write you an untruth? If his charge be just, I did; but his words were, 'though he had solicited the Bishop of London and Sir Robert on behalf of another, not for Epworth, yet he would be glad to serve Mr. Wesley.' But where is the obstacle? Why, my lord of London, who is usually consulted by the minister of state on such occasions, spoke some disadvantageous things of you once

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 23.

in the presence of St. John. But I could not but observe to our friend that the misrepresented strictness of life, which gave occasion for these disadvantageous things to be spoken of you, was so far from being an objection to your being favoured by a Christian bishop, that I humbly hoped it would turn to your good account, inasmuch as over exactness of behaviour was the sign of a tender and well regulated mind. But I cannot here help thinking, '*Tros Tyriusve illi nullo discrimine agetur.*' St. John thinks the Bishop of Oxford can be your friend. Yes, I told him, my lord might give you a favourable word, if asked; but I did not think the interest in his lordship was so prevalent as to make him bestir himself on your behalf. However, if you judge it proper to write to the bishop, I will wait upon him, and do the best I can to serve my dear friend. 1735 Age 32

"Could your father's book be presented to the queen soon? It might do good. Do you know any great man about the court? The king is not so difficult (I hope), if one could get a hearty friend to espouse you. My interest in the speaker is not powerful enough to bring about so desired a work; yet if there was any other great man to befriend you, a serviceable hint might be dropped. I doubt not but our good and loving God will order this and everything else for your great and best good. This is the wish and prayer of, dear sir,

"Yours most sincerely,

"J. BROUGHTON."

Broughton was now curate at the Tower, in London.[1] Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke, was a politician of great ability and power. Sir Robert Walpole was prime minister. The Bishop of London was the celebrated Edmund Gibson. The Epworth living was a gift of the crown. Bear these facts in mind, and the above epistle will be easily interpreted.

Wesley's objections to leave Oxford being overcome, probably by the hard facts and logic of his brother Samuel, he took steps to become his father's successor. Broughton, who was evidently a man of influence and position, was employed to secure the help of Bolingbroke; and Bolingbroke had promised to use his endeavours to serve Wesley; but, on being pressed to fulfil his promise, shrank from doing so, on the ground that he had heard Gibson speak disparagingly of Wesley in Walpole's presence; and, as the next presentation of the Epworth living was, *ipso facto*, at the disposal of these two dignitaries, it was almost useless to bring before them Wesley's wish.

[1] Whitefield's Life, 1756, p. 25.

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Broughton suggests two other steps to be taken, which might be of service in securing the living: (1) that the good services of the Bishop of Oxford be solicited; and (2) that the dying rector's "Dissertations on the Book of Job," dedicated to Queen Caroline, might be presented to her majesty as soon as possible. To adopt the second of these suggestions was impracticable, as the work was only in the course of being printed, and the first opportunity of presenting a copy to the queen did not occur until six months after the rector's death. Whether the first was carried out we have no means of knowing.

The reader will excuse these lengthy observations, on the ground that they help to clear up what has always been a somewhat painfully mysterious chapter in Wesley's history. It is not true that he could not be induced to apply for his father's living. Indirectly, at least, he did apply, but failed; and, remembering this, the wonder is not so great that a few months afterwards he embarked for Georgia.[1]

Little more remains to be said before accompanying Wesley on his mission.

It was in the midst of this correspondence respecting the Epworth rectory, that George Whitefield was introduced to Wesley's acquaintance, and became one of the Oxford Methodists.[2] Three years before, Whitefield had been admitted a servitor of Pembroke College, and had begun to pray and sing psalms five times every day. He longed to be acquainted with the Methodists, and often watched them passing, through ridiculing crowds, to receive the sacrament at St. Mary's; but he was a poor youth, the servitor of other students, and shrunk from obtruding himself upon their notice. At length a woman, in one of the workhouses, attempted to cut her throat; and Whitefield sent an apple-seller, attached to Pembroke College, to inform Charles Wesley of her condition;

[1] The writer is perfectly aware that Wesley states (Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 386) that he continued in his purpose to live and die at Oxford till Dr. Burton pressed him to go to Georgia. This is a fair objection; but the reader will do well to remember that the above statement was made by Wesley in the year 1785; and that it is only reasonable to suppose that Wesley, at the moment, forgot his correspondence with Broughton fifty years previous.

[2] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 288.

and this led Charles to invite him to breakfast next morning. 1735
He was now introduced to the rest of the Methodists, and Age 32
adopted all their rules. The master of his college threatened to expel him. Some of the students shot at him their shafts of ridicule; others threw dirt at him; and others took away their pay from him. Being in great distress about his soul, he lay whole days prostrate on the ground, in silent or vocal prayer; he chose the worst sort of food; he fasted twice a week; he wore woollen gloves, a patched gown, and dirty shoes; and, as a penitent, thought it unbecoming to have his hair powdered. Like all his brother Methodists, he observed Lent with the greatest severity, eating no flesh during the six weeks, except on Saturdays and Sundays. On the other days, his only food was coarse bread, and sage tea without sugar. Abstinence and inward conflicts brought on illness; but, after about seven weeks, he was enabled to lay hold on Christ by a living faith, was filled with peace and joy, and became probably by far the most happy member of the Oxford brotherhood.[1]

Mention has been already made of the first of Wesley's publications,—his "Forms of Prayer," printed in 1733. In 1735 he issued three others.

First, "A Sermon on the Trouble and Rest of Good Men, preached at St. Mary's, Oxford, on Sunday, September 21st, and published at the request of several of the hearers." London: C. Rivington. 1735. This sermon, in two respects, is remarkable; (1) for its un-Wesleyan theology; (2) for its boldly bearding Methodist persecutors in their head-quarters. The preacher tells his hearers that "perfect holiness is not found on earth; but death will destroy, at once, the whole body of sin, and therewith its companion—pain." Two years before, in his sermon on "The Circumcision of the Heart," Wesley had given a beautiful definition of "holiness"; but here he teaches that this holiness is not attainable in life; not until the hour of death; a different doctrine this to that which he afterwards embodied in his "Plain Account of Christian Perfection." But however much the preacher lacked theological correctness, there was no lack of heroic daring: remem-

[1] Whitefield's Life, 1756.

1735 Age 32 bering that, for six years past, he and his associates had been the constant butt of collegiate scorn and ridicule, and that his present congregation, in a great degree, consisted of those who had thought it a privilege to make themselves witty at his expense; one cannot but admire his pluck in telling them, face to face, that, "as at first, he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now, and so it must be, till all things are fulfilled. Despisers were now multiplied upon the earth, who feared not the Son, neither the Father; but blasphemed the Lord and His Anointed; either reviling the whole of His glorious gospel, or making Him a liar as to some of the blessed truths revealed therein. But in heaven good men are hid from the scourge of the tongue. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the prophets do not revile, or separate them from their company. They are no longer despitefully used, and persecuted; neither do they groan under the hand of the oppressor. In a word, in heaven there is no earthly or sensual, no devilish spirit; none who do not love the Lord their God with all their heart."

The second of Wesley's publications, in 1735, was "The Christian's Pattern; or, a Treatise of the Imitation of Christ. Written originally in Latin by Thomas à Kempis. With a Preface containing an Account of the Usefulness of this Treatise. Compared with the original, and corrected throughout. By John Wesley, M.A." London: C. Rivington. Of this work he, at the same time, published two editions,—one in 8vo, 319 pages, with five engravings; and the other in 24mo, 344 pages, with a frontispiece.

His third publication was a manuscript written by his father, and was entitled, "Advice to a Young Clergyman. By a Divine of the Church of England." 12mo, 76 pages.

We now bid adieu to Oxford. We have seen Methodism at its fountain-head; we must hereafter trace it, in its streams of blessing, all the wide world over. The principles and practices of Oxford Methodism may easily be gathered from the present chapter. Nothing has been omitted, nothing exaggerated, and nothing altered. The system was cradled in a storm, and more than once, even at Oxford, was in danger of perishing. At least twice, during Wesley's absence, it was all but wrecked; and, from names casually mentioned, we incline

to think its permanently established converts were much less numerous than its timid, time serving backsliders. At all events, but for the ministry of the two Wesleys, of Whitefield, Ingham, Hervey, and Gambold, the memory of Oxford Methodism might, without public loss, have been buried in oblivion. As it is, no English historian can ignore it. In its results it is one of the greatest facts in church annals. At Oxford, it was far from perfect. It was misty, austere, gloomy, and forbidding; but it was intensely sincere, earnest, and self denying. Its principles and its aims may substantially be summed up in the words of Wesley himself, written forty years afterwards :— 1735 Age 32

"Two young men, without a name, without friends, without either power or fortune, set out from college with principles totally different from those of the common people, to oppose all the world, learned and unlearned; and to combat popular prejudices of every kind. Their first principle directly attacked all the wickedness; their second, all the bigotry in the world. Thus they attempted a reformation, not of opinions (feathers, trifles not worth naming), but of men's tempers and lives; of vice in every kind; of everything contrary to justice, mercy, or truth. And for this it was, that they carried their lives in their hands; and that both the great vulgar and the small looked upon them as mad dogs, and treated them as such."[1]

Let us follow them.

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 446.

CHAPTER IV.

MISSION TO GEORGIA. 1735—1737.

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WESLEY'S father died on the 25th of April, 1735. Immediately after that event, the chief of the Oxford Methodists were widely scattered: Gambold was a clergyman at Stanton-Harcourt; Ingham became a curate in Essex; Whitefield, though not ordained, went on an evangelistic tour to Gloucester, Bristol, and other places;[1] Broughton was chaplain at the Tower; and the two Wesleys repaired to the metropolis, where they were the guests of James Hutton, or rather of James Hutton's father, in Westminster.

Mr. Hutton was now in the twentieth year of his age. At Oxford he had met with the Wesley brothers, and had invited them to visit him. His father was an ordained clergyman of the Church of England; but, not being able to take the oaths at the accession of George I., he had resigned his Church preferments, and now kept a boarding school in a house next door to that of Wesley's brother Samuel. Here, on Sunday evenings, the venerable man held meetings, at which he read, and prayed, and sung with penitents; and here Wesley preached a sermon on "One thing is needful," which was the means of converting both James Hutton and his sister.[2]

Just at this juncture, Dr. John Burton, of Corpus Christi

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[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1798, p. 439.

[2] "Memoirs of Hutton." This is not the place to pursue James Hutton's history. Suffice it to say, that he became one of the principal Moravians in England; and that it was by his exertions *mainly* that the Moravian missions in North America were taken under government protection. He was often contemptuously spoken of as "the deaf old Moravian": but he was a scholar and a gentleman; had intercourse with persons of the highest rank; and was a frequent and almost familiar visitor of George III. and his Queen Charlotte. For many years, his difficulty of hearing was such that he could converse only by the use of an ear trumpet; but his face was always lit up with intellect, and his life was spent in doing good. He died in 1795.

College, Oxford, was evincing great interest in the colonisation of Georgia. Three years before, he had preached and published a sermon, with an appendix on the state of the Georgian settlement. He now met with Wesley in London, and introduced him to Oglethorpe, who strongly urged the high church Methodist to undertake a mission to the infant colony. Wesley took counsel with his brother Samuel; asked the advice of William Law; and went to Manchester to consult his friends Clayton and Byrom. Thence he proceeded to Epworth, and laid the proposal before his widowed mother, who replied: "Had I twenty sons, I should rejoice if they were all so employed." 1735 Age 32

On September 8 Dr. Burton wrote to him pressing him to consent to go. The doctor told him that "plausible and popular doctors of divinity were not the men wanted for Georgia; for the ease, luxury, and levity in which they were accustomed to indulge disqualified them for such a work." He and the Georgian trustees wished for men who were "inured to contempt of the ornaments and conveniences of life, to bodily austerities, and to serious thoughts;" and such he considered Wesley.

Ten days after the date of this letter Wesley accepted the proposal, and Burton expressed his pleasure, and added, "You have too much steadiness of mind to be disturbed by the light scoffs of the idle and profane."[1] In another long letter (hitherto unpublished), dated Eton College, September 28, 1735, Dr. Burton, after reminding Wesley that he will have a fine opportunity for usefulness during the voyage to Georgia, proceeds to recommend him, on his arrival, to visit from house to house, and preach everywhere. He tells him that "some of the colonists are ignorant, and most of them are disposed to licentiousness." He adds: "You will find abundant room for the exercise of patience and prudence, as well as piety. One end for which we were associated was the conversion of negro slaves. As yet, nothing has been attempted in this way; but a door is opened. The Purisburghers have purchased slaves; they act under our influence; and Mr. Oglethorpe will think it advisable to begin there. You

[1] *Wesley Banner*, 1852, p. 351.

1735 Age 32 see the harvest truly is great. With regard to your behaviour and manner of address, you will keep in mind the pattern of St. Paul, who became 'all things to all men that he might gain some.' In every case, distinguish between what is essential and what is merely circumstantial to Christianity; between what is indispensable and what is variable; between what is of Divine and what is of human authority. I mention this, because men are apt to deceive themselves in such cases; and we see the traditions and ordinances of men frequently insisted on with more vigour than the commandments of God to which they are subordinate."

This was good advice, and, in Wesley's case, not unneeded. Sixteen days after the date of Dr. Burton's letter, Wesley embarked, taking with him five hundred and fifty copies of a treatise on the Lord's Supper, besides other books,—"the gift of several Christian friends for the use of the settlers in Georgia."[1]

James Edward Oglethorpe was the third son of Sir Theophilus Oglethorpe, of Godalming, Surrey. At a suitable age he entered the army, and became secretary and aide-de-camp to Prince Eugene. In 1722 he succeeded to his father's estate, and obtained a seat in parliament, which he retained nearly thirty years. From the first, he showed himself to be a steady and faithful friend of humanity. These were days of harsh government. The gallows was the penalty for petty thefts; and each year, at least four thousand unhappy men in Great Britain were immured in prison for the misfortune of being poor. A small debt was quite enough to expose a struggling man to a perpetuity of imprisonment; and an indiscreet bargain doomed many a well-meaning, miserable dupe to lifelong confinement. Oglethorpe obtained a parliamentary committee, to inquire into the state of prisons; the result of which was that a large number of debtors were released from confinement, and restored to light and to liberty. Being released, it was a serious question what to do with them.

It so happened that, though the whole of the eastern seaboard of America seemed to be already parcelled out among companies and colonists, there was still remaining a com-

[1] *Evening Post*, Oct. 14, 1735.

paratively small strip of country, intervening between South Carolina and Florida, and situated between the river Alatamaha on the south and the river Savannah on the north, and having a sea-coast stretching a distance of sixty or seventy miles. This strip of land was a wilderness over which England held only a nominal jurisdiction; but it occurred to Oglethorpe and his friends to plant in this sunny clime those children of misfortune whom they had released from prison, but who were still without food and shelter. Accordingly, on the 9th of June, 1732, a charter was obtained from George II., erecting this thin slice of America into the province of Georgia, and appointing Oglethorpe and twenty other gentlemen (of whom Dr. Burton was one) trustees to hold the same for a period of one and twenty years, "in trust for the poor." The benevolence of England was aroused. The trustees set an example of princely liberality by their private subscriptions; the Bank of England presented a donation of £10,000; an equal amount was voted by the House of Commons; and the total sum raised, with but little effort, and almost without solicitation, was £36,000. Within five months after the signing of the charter, the first company of emigrants, one hundred and twenty in number, set sail, with Oglethorpe as their commander, and the Rev. Henry Herbert, a clergyman of the Established Church, as their minister. At the commencement of the month of February, 1733, the colonists reached the high bluff on which Savannah is now erected, and encamped near the edge of the river. The streets of the intended town were laid out with the greatest regularity; and the houses were to be constructed on one model,—each a frame of sawn timber, measuring sixteen feet by twenty-four, its sides to be enclosed with unplaned boards, and its floor to be of rough deals, and its roof of shingle. Each freeholder was allotted fifty acres of ground, five of which were near Savannah, and the remaining forty-five farther off. Thus began the commonwealth of Georgia. The humane reformer of prison life was already the father of a state. A large number of Indians met him to make an alliance with his colony; the meeting was friendly: to each chief he gave a laced coat, a hat, and a shirt; and to their attendants gunpowder, bullets, linen, tobacco, pipes, tape, and eight kegs of rum, to carry home as presents to

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1735 Age 32 their respective towns. In a letter, dated June 9, 1733, Oglethorpe states that a door was opened for the conversion of the Indians; and nothing seemed to be wanting but a minister who understood their language: in action and expression, they were masters of eloquence, and many of their speeches were equal to those which scholars most admire in the Greek and Roman writings.[1]

The next company of emigrants belonged to a different class. About a year before the charter for the Georgian colony was granted, a remarkable revival of religion took place at Saltzburg, in Germany. By merely reading the Bible, above twenty thousand people were led to renounce Popery and to embrace the Reformed religion. The popish priests complained to the Archbishop of Saltzburg that these Protestant converts assembled in various places, and sang hymns and offered prayers. The archbishop published an edict prohibiting such assemblies, upon pain of fines, corporal punishments, and even death itself. The new converts, however, still assembled as before; and now his serene highness the archbishop let loose his partisans, and commenced a murderous persecution, which drove thousands of innocent, unoffending, godly people into exile. Numbers were dragged to prison; some were led about with ropes round their necks; others had their hands so tightly tied with cords behind their backs that the blood spurted from their finger ends. The archbishop's soldiers struck some of them in the face with their fists, calling them "heretic dogs and hell-hounds." One poor fellow was fined seventy florins for singing a Protestant psalm of praise. Protestant preachers were called "murderers, buffle-heads, and children of the devil"; and the Protestant doctrine was stigmatised as "faith for swine and stinking goats." Every one who embraced Luther's doctrines "would be roasted in hell"; and the moment any one read his books the reader "became an offering to the devil."[2]

What was the result? The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts heard of these poor persecuted

[1] *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1733, p. 384.

[2] "Account of the Sufferings of the Persecuted Protestants in the Archbishoprick of Saltzburg." London: 1733.

Protestants, and proposed to them to emigrate to Georgia. Thousands of them had fled from Saltzburg; and others were still in prison there, fed with bread and water, and employing themselves in praying and singing psalms. Large numbers were taken into service by Protestants at Augsburg and other places; and one section of the fugitives embraced the proposal just mentioned, and on October 31, 1733, set out for Georgia. After a discourse, prayer, and benedictions, and well supplied with Bibles, hymns, catechisms, and books of devotion, they began their pilgrimage, one wagon conveying all the chattels that they had, and two others their feebler companions and their little ones. We need not stop to tell the charities that cheered them on their journey,—how they entered Frankfort, two by two, in solemn procession, singing sacred songs,—and how they were joined at Rotterdam by the preachers Bolzius and Gronau, both disciplined in piety at the Orphan House of Professor Francke. Six days brought them to Dover, where several of the Georgian trustees met them and provided for their wants; and on January 8, 1734, they set sail, singing the "Te Deum" and praising God with both lips and hearts. 1735 Age 32

The Saltzburghers arrived in Georgia in the month of March, met with Oglethorpe, and chose a settlement twenty-one miles from Savannah, where there were "rivers, little hills, clear brooks, cool springs, a fertile soil, and plenty of grass." At Charlestown, where they first landed, they ascertained that in the province of Carolina there were thirty thousand negroes, all of them slaves, working six days in the week for their owners without pay, and allowed to work on the Sundays for themselves. Near Savannah, they found a beautiful garden of ten acres, already planted with thriving orange-trees, olives, mulberries, figs, peaches, cabbages, peas, and pulse. The spot which they had chosen as their settlement, and to which they gave the name of Ebenezer, was surrounded by vast forests of cedars, walnuts, cypresses, and oaks, with wild vines running to the top of the highest trees. As to game, there were eagles, turkeys, roebucks, goats, deer, wild cows, horses, hares, partridges, and buffaloes without number. The Saltzburghers built tents made of the bark of trees, constructed roads and bridges, set up religious services, were furnished

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with domestic utensils and with cattle, and were soon a prosperous community.

In April Oglethorpe returned to England, bringing with him Tomo-chichi and other Indians, to invigorate the confidence of England in the destiny of Georgia. Parliament continued its benefactions, the king expressed interest in a province which bore his name, and the youngest child of England's colonial enterprise won universal favour.

The next company of emigrants were a number of Scotch Highlanders, who founded New Inverness, in Darien; the next a number of Moravians, of whom more anon; and the next after that, the company with whom Wesley sailed. Wesley's predecessor in Georgia was the Rev. Samuel Quincy,[1] a native of Massachusetts, but educated in England. Mr. Quincy wishing to return to England, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts sent Wesley as his successor, at a salary of £50 a year.[2] The chief object in founding the colony was to grow flax and hemp, to breed silkworms, and to raise raw silk.[3] The common seal of the corporation had on one side a group of silkworms at their toils, with the motto, *Non sibi, sed aliis;* and on the other, two figures reposing on urns, emblematic of the boundary rivers; and between them the genius of "Georgia Augusta," with the cap of liberty on her head, a spear in one hand, and the horn of plenty in the other. It must be added that in this young community ardent spirits were prohibited, and the introduction of slavery forbidden.

The Transatlantic colonies existing in 1735 were nothing more than a mere fringe skirting the eastern coast of that vast continent. The Spaniards were in Florida; the English in Georgia, the Carolinas, Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New England; and the French in Canada. This was all. Excepting these few feeble colonial settlements, the whole of the immense American continent—which, measuring from New York to California, and from Lake Superior to New Orleans, extends in one direction 3300 miles and in the other 1300 miles—was one vast, rich, but uncultivated wilderness, the home of myriads of birds and beasts, and sparsely inhabited

[1] Wright's Memoir of Oglethorpe, p. 77.
[2] *Methodist Magazine*, 1844, p. 920.
[3] "Reasons for Establishing the Colony of Georgia." London: 1733.

by savage Indians. Bancroft enumerates above forty Indian tribes, or nations, embracing about 180,000 souls, whose wigwams and hunting grounds were all situated on the eastern side of the Mississippi. The men were warriors, and the women labourers. Their education was acquired solely in the school of nature, and their chief almanac was the flight of birds, announcing the progress of the seasons. They kept no herds, and were never shepherds, but depended for their food on the chase, the fisheries, and a little farming. Their scanty clothing was made of skins, and their feet protected by soft mocassins. Their principal ornaments were strings of shells, the fairest feathers of the turkey, the skin of the rattlesnake, and an enemy's scalp. Their skins were oft tattooed; and, when making visits, they painted themselves gloriously, delighting especially in vermilion. They worshipped an unseen power pervading everything, which they called the Great Spirit, and had their sorcerers, medicine men, and prophets. Faith in the spirit world, as revealed by dreams, was universal; and festivals in honour of the dead were frequent. 1735 Age 32

What became of these Indians? and where are their descendants? To answer these questions would be to pass through scenes of horror without a parallel, and to write a history of blood.

Such was America in 1735. What is it now, and what is likely to be its future? Who could have imagined that, in one hundred and thirty years, this huge wilderness would be transformed into one of the greatest nations upon earth; and that the Methodism, begun at Savannah, would pervade the continent, and, ecclesiastically considered, become the mightiest power existing? But we must now return to Wesley and his Georgian mission.

In a letter, dated October 10, 1735, Wesley gives his reasons for going to Georgia. He writes:—

"My chief motive is the hope of saving my own soul. I hope to learn the true sense of the gospel of Christ by preaching it to the heathen. They have no comments to construe away the text; no vain philosophy to corrupt it; no luxurious, sensual, covetous, ambitious expounders to soften its unpleasing truths. They have no party, no interest to serve, and are therefore fit to receive the gospel in its simplicity. They are as little children, humble, willing to learn, and eager to do, the will of God.

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"A right faith will, I trust, by the mercy of God, open the way for a right practice; especially when most of those temptations are removed which here so easily beset me. It will be no small thing to be able, without fear of giving offence, to live on water and the fruits of the earth. An Indian hut affords no food for curiosity, no gratification of the desire of grand, or new, or pretty things. The pomp and show of the work, have no place in the wilds of America.

"Further: I hope from the moment I leave the English shore, under the acknowledged character of a teacher sent from God, there shall be no word heard from my lips but what properly flows from that character; and the same faithfulness I hope to show in dispensing my Master's goods, if it please Him to send me to those who, like His first followers, have all things common. What a guard is here against that root of evil, the love of money, and all the vile attractions that spring from it!

"I then hope to know what it is to love my neighbour as myself, and to feel the powers of that second motive to visit the heathens, even the desire to impart to them what I have received,—a saving knowledge of the gospel of Christ. I have been a grievous sinner from my youth up, and am yet laden with foolish and hurtful desires; but I am assured, if I be once converted myself, God will then employ me both to strengthen my brethren, and to preach His name to the gentiles.

"I cannot hope to attain the same degree of holiness here, which I may there. I shall lose nothing I desire to keep. I shall still have food to eat, and raiment to put on; and, if any man have a desire of other things, let him know that the greatest blessing that can possibly befal him is, to be cut off from all occasions of gratifying those desires which, unless speedily rooted out, will drown his soul in everlasting perdition."[1]

Exception may fairly be taken to some of the sentiments contained in this letter. The Indians were not the docile children that Wesley imagined; nor is it true that life in heathendom is more favourable to the attainment of holiness than life in Christendom: but we neither have space nor wish to criticise Wesley's views, our chief object being to represent him as he represents himself.

Wesley went on board the *Simmonds*, off Gravesend, on October 14, 1735; and, the day following, he wrote a characteristic letter, (probably his last before leaving the English waters,) to his brother Samuel, who was now head master of the school at Tiverton. After telling him that, two days before, he had presented to the queen his father's "Dissertations on the Book of Job," and had received "many good words and smiles," he continues:—

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 35.

"Elegance of style is not to be weighed against purity of heart; therefore, whatever has any tendency to impair that purity is not to be tolerated, much less recommended, for the sake of that elegance. But of this sort are most of the classics usually read in great schools: many of them tending to inflame the lusts of the flesh, and more to feed the lust of the eye and the pride of life. I beseech you therefore, by the mercies of God, who would have us holy as He is holy, that you banish all such poison from your school; and that you introduce, in their place, such Christian authors as will work together with you in building up your flock in the knowledge and love of God. For assure yourself, dear brother, you are even now called to the converting of heathens as well as I. So many souls are committed to your charge by God, to be prepared for a happy eternity. You are to instruct them, not only in the beggarly elements of Greek and Latin; but much more, in the gospel. You are to labour with all your might to convince them, that Christianity is not a negation, or an external thing, but a new heart, a mind conformed to that of Christ, 'faith working by love.'"[1] 1735 Age 32

Two days after writing the above, Wesley, in order to converse with his German fellow-passengers, began to study that language; and three days later, believing that self-denial might be helpful to his piety, he wholly left off the use of flesh and wine, and confined himself to a vegetable diet, chiefly rice and biscuit. This he continued during the whole of his residence in Georgia; but on his return to England, for the sake of some who thought he made it a point of conscience, he resumed his former mode of living, and practised it to the end of life, except during a two years' interim, when he again became vegetarian and teetotaler, because Dr. Cheyne assured him that this was the only way to "be free from fevers."[2]

Wesley is on board—who are the chief of his fellow voyagers? His brother Charles, Benjamin Ingham, James Edward Oglethorpe, Charles Delamotte, and David Nitschmann. Two others had intended going, namely, Westley Hall and Matthew Salmon; and both had been recently ordained with reference to the Georgian mission. At the last moment, however, Salmon's friends pounced upon him, and sent him, almost forcibly, to his parental home in Cheshire; while Hall, who had actually hired a coach to carry him and his wife (Wesley's sister) to Gravesend, where the ship was lying,

[1] Priestley's Letters, p. 56.
[2] Wesley's Works, vol. i., p. 16, and vol. viii., p. 471.

1735 Age 32 received, as he was about to start, the intelligence that his family were not only opposed to his embarking, but had procured him a Church benefice. This so changed his missionary views and feelings, that he instantly countermanded the order for the coach, put aside all his luggage and preparations for the mission, and, hastening to General Oglethorpe, told him he had resolved not to go.[1]

Of Charles Wesley nothing need be said; his fame is everywhere. Benjamin Ingham was a young Yorkshireman, twenty-three years of age, and, for the last three months, had been preaching in the villages surrounding the metropolis with singular success. "Fast, and pray," wrote Wesley at the beginning of September: "fast and pray; and then send me word whether you dare go with me to the Indians." Ingham at first thought there were heathens enough at home; but, a fortnight after, he acceded to Wesley's proposal; and, with as pure and devoted a heart as ever throbbed in missionary's bosom, away he went to convert the Indians in America.

Oglethorpe has been already mentioned. Suffice it to add, that though chivalrous in the highest degree, and the very soul of benevolence and honour,—though brave and loyal, and full of enthusiastic feeling,—he was irascible and sometimes rash, talkative, tinged with vanity, and somewhat boastful. Like many other public men, he became the victim of unmerited censure and injudicious praise. The last thirty years of his life were chiefly spent in the society of literary and learned men. He died in 1785; and Hannah More, in a letter dated a year before his death, spoke of him thus: "He is much above ninety years old, and the finest figure you ever saw. He perfectly realises all my ideas of Nestor. His literature is great, his knowledge of the world extensive, and his faculties as bright as ever. He is quite a *preux chevalier*, heroic, romantic, and full of the old gallantry."

Charles Delamotte was a young man of twenty-one, the son of a Middlesex magistrate; and was so attached to Wesley, that when he heard he was about to embark for Georgia he determined to go with him, and to act as his servant. His

[1] Ingham manuscripts.

father, naturally enough, strongly objected, and offered to settle him in a handsome business; but the youth was obstinate, and after obtaining a partial consent from his parents and family, set sail with Wesley, lived with him, served under him as a son in the gospel, did much good, and endured great hardships for the sake of Christ. On his return to England, he became a Moravian, settled at Barrow-upon-Humber, where he spent a long life of piety and peace, and died in 1796.[1] 1735 Age 32

David Nitschmann was born in Moravia, and was now in the sixtieth year of his age. In 1720 a remarkable revival of religion took place in the town where David lived; but, by the intervention of the Jesuits, the meetings of the new converts were prohibited, and many who attended them were imprisoned in stables, cellars, and other offensive places. A police officer entered Nitschmann's house, where one hundred and fifty of these godly people were assembled, and seized all the books within his reach. The congregation at once struck up a stanza of one of Luther's hymns:—

> "If the whole world with devils swarmed,
> That threatened us to swallow,
> We will not fear, for we are armed,
> And victory will follow."

Twenty persons, including David, all heads of respectable families, were arrested and sent to gaol. For three days David was deprived of food, and was so cruelly ironed that the blood spurted from his nose and mouth, and oozed from his very pores. After some time, he escaped from his horrid dungeon, and fled for safety to his Moravian friends at Herrnhut. David was now a Moravian bishop, and accompanied by about thirty Moravians, was on his way to visit the congregations of the Brethren in Georgia.

Such were the chief of Wesley's fellow voyagers. As already stated, they embarked at Gravesend on October 14, 1735; but it was not until December 10 that they fairly started.[2] First of all, they encountered a storm in the Downs;

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[1] Manuscripts.

[2] Francis Moore, who sailed in the *Simmonds*, became keeper of the stores in Georgia, and in 1744 published an account of his voyage; and relates, as its principal incidents, that a boy fell overboard, but was rescued by a rope; in the Downs, a servant was set on shore because he had the

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then, on arriving at Cowes, they had to await the man-of-war that was to be their convoy.

The rules which Wesley and his friends observed during their long voyage were as follows:—From four in the morning till five, they employed in private prayer. From five to seven, they read the Bible together, carefully comparing what they read with the writings of the earliest ages. At seven, they breakfasted. At eight, they had public prayers and expounded the lesson. From nine to twelve, Wesley usually learned German, Delamotte studied Greek and navigation, Charles Wesley wrote sermons, and Ingham gave instruction to the twelve children on board. At twelve, they met together for mutual prayer, and to report progress. About one, they dined; and from the time of dinner till four in the afternoon, they read or spoke to certain of the passengers of whom they had respectively taken charge. At four, they had evening prayers, and either expounded the lesson, or catechized and instructed the children in the presence of the congregation. From five to six was again spent in private prayer. From six to seven they read, each in his own cabin, to three different detachments of the English passengers, of whom about eighty were on board. At seven, Wesley joined the Moravians in their public service; while Ingham read, between the decks, to as many as desired to hear. At eight, the four faithful friends met in private to exhort and instruct each other; and, between nine and ten, they went to bed without mats and blankets, where neither the roaring of the sea nor the rocking of the ship could rob them of refreshing rest.[1]

While detained at Cowes, Wesley, after careful instruction, baptized four unbaptized Quakers.[2] Charles Wesley, being known to the minister of the town, preached several times in the parish church to large congregations; and, in the house of a poor woman, read to the crowds which flocked to hear him. In other respects also their detention was productive of good;

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itch; the passengers had prayers twice a day; Wesley and his friends expounded the Scriptures and catechized the children, and ate at Oglethorpe's table; the Germans sung psalms, and served God in their own way; and the only person punished during the voyage was a boy for stealing turnips.

[1] Ingham's Journal. [2] Ibid.

for a gentleman who scoffed at religion left the ship; the second mate, who was an insolent and ill natured fellow, was expelled; and a young man was received on board, who, for his piety, had been turned adrift by his rich parents, and had been praying incessantly that he might be directed to a place where he could have the advantage of public prayers and the holy sacrament. 1735 Age 32

On November 3, while walking in the Isle of Wight, the four friends agreed upon the following resolutions, which they solemnly subscribed:—

"In the name of God, Amen! We, whose names are underwritten, being fully convinced that it is impossible, either to promote the work of God among the heathen, without an entire union among ourselves, or that such a union should subsist, unless each one will give up his single judgment to that of the majority, do agree, by the help of God:—first, that none of us will undertake anything of importance without first proposing it to the other three;—secondly, that whenever our judgments differ, any one shall give up his single judgment or inclination to the others;—thirdly, that in case of an equality, after begging God's direction, the matter shall be decided by lot.

John Wesley,
Charles Wesley,
Benjamin Ingham,
Charles Delamotte."[1]

Of the Moravians on board, Ingham, in a long letter to his mother, wrote as follows:—"They are a good, devout, peaceable, and heavenly-minded people; and almost the only time you know they are in the ship is when they are harmoniously singing the praises of the great Creator, which they constantly do twice a day. Their example was very edifying. They are more like the primitive Christians than any church now existing, for they retain both the faith, practice, and discipline delivered by the apostles. They have regularly ordained bishops, priests, and deacons. Baptisms, confirmation, and the eucharist are duly administered. Discipline is strictly exercised, without respect of persons. They all submit themselves to their pastors in everything. They live together in perfect love and peace, having for the present all things common. They are more ready to serve their

[1] Ingham's Journal.

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neighbours than themselves. In business they are diligent, in all their dealings strictly just; and in everything they behave themselves with meekness, sweetness, and humility."

From the same letter we learn that, on October 18, Wesley and Ingham began to read the Old Testament together; and, at the rate of between nine and ten chapters daily, finished it before they arrived at Georgia. On the day following, Wesley commenced preaching without notes; and during the passage, in a series of sermons, he went through the whole of our Saviour's sermon on the mount, and, every sabbath, had a weekly sacrament.

The voyage, from Cowes to the Savannah river, was made in fifty-seven days. Oglethorpe seems to have acted with great kindness. On one occasion, when some of the officers and gentlemen on board took liberties with Wesley and his friends, Oglethorpe indignantly exclaimed, "What mean you, sirs? Do you take these gentlemen for tithe-pig parsons? They are gentlemen of learning and respectability. They are my friends, and whoever offers an affront to them insults me."[1] This was quite enough, and, ever after, the poor Methodists were treated with respect. Oglethorpe was irritable, but noble-hearted and generous. Wesley, hearing an unusual noise in the general's cabin, entered to inquire the cause; on which the angry soldier cried: "Excuse me, Mr. Wesley; I have met with a provocation too great to bear. This villain, Grimaldi, an Italian servant, has drunk nearly the whole of my Cyprus wine, the only wine that agrees with me, and several dozens of which I had provided for myself. But I am determined to be revenged. The rascal shall be tied hand and foot, and be carried to the man-of-war; for I never forgive." "Then," said Wesley with great calmness, "then I hope, sir, you never sin." Oglethorpe was confounded, his vengeance was gone, he put his hand into his pocket, pulled out a bunch of keys, and threw them at Grimaldi, saying, "There, villain! take my keys, and behave better for the future."[2]

The voyage to Georgia was not without danger. On the 17th of January, the sea broke over the ship, and, shaking

[1] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 256. [2] Ibid. p. 259.

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it from stem to stern, brought down the mainyard upon the decks, and dashed through the cabin windows. Six days after, an immense wave vaulted over Wesley's head, and drenched him to the skin. Two days later, the winds roared, and the ship rocked to and fro with the utmost violence. The sea sparkled and smoked as if on fire, and the air literally blazed with lightning. The mainsail was torn to tatters, and the companion swept away.[1] Just at the time this occurred, the Moravians were engaged in their evening service, and were singing a psalm of praise. As usual, Wesley was with them. The English passengers began screaming; but the Germans calmly continued singing. Wesley was struck with this, and asked one of them, after the service was concluded, "Were you not afraid?" He answered, "I thank God, no." Wesley asked again, "But were not your women and children afraid?" "No," replied the Moravian, "our women and children are not afraid to die." From the Moravians Wesley went among the terror-struck English, and pointed out the difference between him that feareth God and him that feareth Him not; and then concludes his account of the storm by saying, "This was the most glorious day which I had ever seen." Eleven days after, on February 5, 1736, they safely cast anchor in the Savannah river, and were welcomed by the firing of cannon, and by all the freeholders, constables, and tithingmen, presenting arms; while Oglethorpe's first act was to give orders to provide materials to build a church.[2]

Savannah was now a town of about forty houses,[3] standing on a flat bluff, rising forty or fifty feet above the crescent river flowing at its base. On the eastern side of the town was a swamp, on the west a wood, and on the south a forest of pines, fourteen miles in length. The principal buildings were a courthouse, which served also for a church, a log-built prison, a storehouse, a public mill for grinding corn, and a residence for the trustees' steward. All the houses were of the same size. There were still standing the four beautiful pines, under which Oglethorpe encamped when he landed with the first

[1] Ingham's Journal. [2] The *Old Whig*, June 17, 1736.
[3] *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1736.

1736 Age 33 settlers, and which for nearly a twelvemonth he used as a sleeping place. At the distance of about half a mile was a small Indian town, in which large numbers of the Creek nation were occasionally accustomed to assemble. The climate was exceedingly salubrious, the land rich, and the water good.[1] Every male emigrant was allowed a watch coat, a musket, a bayonet, a hatchet, a hammer, a hand saw, a shovel, a hoe, a gimlet, a knife, an iron pot, a pair of pothooks, and a frying-pan: also for his maintenance, during the first year, 312 lbs. of beef or pork, 104 of rice, 104 of Indian corn or peas, 104 of meal, one pint of strong beer per day, 52 quarts of molasses, 16 lbs. of cheese, 12 of butter, eight oz. of spice, 12 lbs. of sugar, four gallons of vinegar, 24 lbs. of salt, 12 quarts of lamp oil, one lb. of cotton thread, and 12 lbs. of soap. Proportionate allowances were made to women and children.[2] Such facts will help the reader to imagine the kind of home and society which Wesley had in Georgia.

The only other towns in Georgia, even when Wesley came back to England, were Frederica, in St. Simon's Island, one hundred miles south of Savannah; Darien, the settlement of the Scotch Highlanders, at a distance of about eighty miles; New Ebenezer, consisting of sixty huts, nineteen miles; Highgate and Hampstead, with fourteen families, four or five miles south-west, and Thunderbolt, with three families, six miles south-east. Such were the English settlements in Georgia. All the rest of that large territory was wood, swamp, and prairie, the home of savage Indians, and of savage beasts. The Georgian Indians had no literature, no religion, and no civil government. Every one did what was right in his own eyes; and, if his neighbour felt aggrieved, he would warily do his best to shoot him, scalp him, or cut off his ears. All of them, except perhaps the Choctaws, were gluttons, drunkards, thieves, and liars; implacable, unmerciful, murderers of fathers, murderers of mothers, murderers of their own children. Husbands, strictly speaking, the women had none, for the men left their so called wives at pleasure; and the wives, in return for such desertion, would cut the throats of all the children

[1] "New Voyage to Georgia," 2nd edit., 1737.
[2] "A Voyage to Georgia," by F. Moore. London: 1744.

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they had had by their faithless swains. The Choctaws possessed a large extent of land, eight or nine hundred miles west of Savannah, had many well inhabited towns, and six thousand warriors. The Chicasaws, dwelling among meadows, springs, and rivers, six or seven hundred miles in the interior, had ten towns, and about nine hundred fighting men,—all of them eating, drinking, and smoking almost day and night, extremely indolent except in war, and torturing and burning their prisoners with the most fiendish cruelty. The Cherokees lived in a mountainous, fruitful, and pleasant country, three or four hundred miles from Savannah, had fifty-two towns, and above three thousand men of war. The Uchees had only one small town, near two hundred miles distant from the Savannah settlement, and were hated by most and despised by all the other Indian tribes, for their cowardice and superlative diligence in thieving. The Creeks were located at a distance of about four hundred miles, had a well watered country, and fifteen hundred fighting men, and, of all the Indians, were the most infected with the insatiate love of drink, as well as other European vices. In such a country John Wesley lived, from February 5, 1736, to December 2, 1737.

One of the first to meet Wesley on the shores of Georgia was the well known Moravian elder, August Gottlieb Spangenberg. Wesley asked his advice how to act in his new sphere of labour. Spangenberg replied, "My brother, I must first ask you one or two questions Have you the witness within yourself? Does the Spirit of God bear witness with your spirit, that you are a child of God?" Wesley was surprised at such questions. They were new to him. He was at a loss how to answer. Spangenberg continued, "Do you know Jesus Christ?" This was easier, and Wesley answered, "I know He is the Saviour of the world." "True," said Spangenberg; "but do you know He has saved *you?*" Wesley was again perplexed, but answered, "I hope He has died to save me." Spangenberg only added, "Do you know yourself?" Wesley replied, "I do." An odd conversation, leaving Spangenberg in doubt respecting the real conversion of the Oxford priest, and leading Wesley to think of doctrines which took him more than the next two years to understand.

Nine days after his arrival, Wesley and his friends were

1736 Age 33 visited by Tomo-Chichi (whom Oglethorpe had brought to England some time before) and half-a-dozen other Indians. Informed of their arrival, the young clergymen met them in their gowns and cassocks. The chief bid them welcome, said he would assemble the great men of his nation, and expressed a wish that they would teach his children; while his wife gave them a jar of milk, as emblematic of her wish that they might feed the Indians with milk, for they were but children, and a jar of honey, with the hope that the missionaries would be sweet to them.[1]

Ingham and Charles Wesley went off with Oglethorpe to lay out the town of Frederica; and Wesley and Delamotte, having no house of their own to live in, lodged, during the first month, with Spangenberg, Nitschmann, and other Moravian friends. Thus, from morning to night, were they mixed up with these godly people, and had ample opportunity to observe their spirit and behaviour. Wesley writes: "They were always employed, always cheerful themselves, and in good humour with one another; they had put away all anger, and strife, and wrath, and bitterness, and clamour, and evil speaking; they walked worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called, and adorned the gospel of our Lord in all things." Wesley was present at the election and ordination of Anton Seifart[2] as a bishop for Georgia, the simplicity and solemnity of the service making him almost forget the seventeen hundred years between, and imagine himself in one of those assemblies where form and state were not, but Paul the tentmaker or Peter the fisherman presided, with the demonstration of the Spirit and of power. Who can estimate the influence of such intercourse in moulding the subsequent character and life of this inquiring missionary?

Mr. Quincy, Wesley's predecessor, having now removed to Carolina, Wesley took possession of the wood-built rectory, and, on March 7th, commenced his ministry at Savannah by preaching a sermon from 1 Corinthians xiii. 3, in which he introduced two death-bed scenes,—that of his father at Epworth, and another which he had witnessed at Savannah, and which was "a spectacle worthy to be seen of God and

[1] Ingham's Journal. [2] James Hutton's Memoirs, p. 22

angels and men."[1] He officiated at nine in the morning, at twelve, and again in the afternoon;[2] and announced his design to administer the sacrament on every Sunday and on every holiday. 1736 Age 33

A few days subsequent to this, writing to his mother, he remarked:—"We are likely to stay here some months. The place is pleasant beyond imagination, and exceeding healthful. I have not had a moment's illness of any kind since I set my foot upon the continent; nor do I know any more than one of my seven hundred parishioners who is sick at this time. Many of them indeed are, I believe, very angry already; for a gentleman, no longer ago than last night (March 17), made a ball; but the public prayers happening to begin about the same time, the church was full, and the ballroom so empty that the entertainment could not go forward. I should be heartily glad if any poor and religious men or women of Epworth or Wroote would come over to me. General Oglethorpe would give them land enough, and provisions gratis, till they could live on the produce of it."[3]

Wesley, in this letter, evidently considers the whole of the Georgian settlements as his parish; for, so far from Savannah having at this time a population of seven hundred souls, there was scarcely that number in the whole of the settlements put together. Georgia was his parish; for, Mr. Quincy being gone, he was the only minister of the Church of England inducted into ministerial work in the Georgian territory. Charles Wesley was Oglethorpe's secretary; and though Benjamin Ingham had gone with a few colonists to where Frederica was to stand, Frederica itself as yet did not exist. Besides, Ingham's visit was intended to be but temporary, his mind being fully fixed upon a mission to the Indians. Indeed, this was Wesley's purpose also. Their only object in quitting England was, not to preach to the colonists, but to the Indians; and the reason why Wesley had begun to preach to the English at Savannah was because Mr. Quincy, the minister of the English, had left the colony, and they were now as sheep without a shepherd; and also because, through the French on

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1797, p. 371.
[2] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 289. [3] Ibid. vol. xii., p. 15.

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the one hand and the Spaniards on the other, the Indians were at present in great confusion, and had become so excited by French and Spanish plots and treachery that it was not only dangerous to go among them, but, as Tomo-Chichi told Wesley and his friends at the interview already mentioned, they seemed determined not to hear "the great word" which the white man had to teach.[1] In these two facts we find the reason, and the only reason, why Wesley's object in going to Georgia was not fulfilled; and why, instead of preaching to the Indians in the woods, he spent his time in preaching to the English at Savannah.

The commencement of Wesley's ministry was auspicious. A fortnight after preaching his first sermon, he wrote to his brother Charles as follows: "I have hitherto no opposition at all; all is smooth, and fair, and promising. Many seem to be awakened; all are full of respect and commendation. We cannot see any cloud gathering. But this calm cannot last: storms must come hither too; and let them come, when we are ready to meet them."[2]

Wesley had lived so long in the tempest of opposition that it is no wonder he felt it strange to find himself in the midst of an unbroken calm, surrounded by nothing but "respect and commendation." This was a new experience, but it was soon ended.

Charles Wesley and Ingham were already in hot water at Frederica, and the latter hurried off to Savannah for advice. It was only three weeks since Wesley had there commenced his ministry; yet he had already established daily morning and evening public prayers, and a weekly communion; he had also formed a society, which met on Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday nights, to read and pray and sing psalms together; and Delamotte had begun to teach a few orphan children.[3] This was a vigorous beginning, but now Wesley and Delamotte had to hasten to Frederica, leaving Ingham to supply their place in the best way he could.

Charles had been baptizing children by trine immersion, and endeavouring to reconcile scolding women. Some of these

[1] Ingham's Journal. [2] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 293.
[3] Ingham's Journal.

termagants had prejudiced Oglethorpe against him, and the poor secretary was now treated with coldness, and even charged with mutiny. A woman, whose husband had been put into confinement, blamed him for being the cause of it, and threatened to be revenged upon him, by "exposing his d——d hypocrisy and his prayers four times a day by beat of drum."[1] While all the others were provided with boards to sleep upon, he was left to sleep upon the ground. His few well-wishers became afraid to speak to him, and even his washerwoman refused in future to wash his linen. 1736 Age 33

Wesley and Delamotte left Savannah on April 4, and returned on April 20; having spent ten days on the voyage, and six in settling the miserable squabbles that had sprung up among the palmetto huts of Frederica.

On the day of his arrival, Wesley wrote to Oglethorpe as follows:—

"SAVANNAH, *April* 20, 1736.

"SAVANNAH never was so dear to me as now. I found so little either of the form or power of godliness at Frederica, that I am sincerely glad I am removed from it. There is none of those who did run well whom I pity more than Mrs. Hawkins.[2] Her treating me in such a manner would indeed have little affected me, had my own interests only been concerned. I have been used to be betrayed, scorned, and insulted, by those I had most laboured to serve. But when I reflect on her condition, my heart bleeds for her."

Wesley then refers to the accusation against his brother, to the effect that, by the frequency of his public prayers, he prevented the men attending to their proper work, and interrupted the progress of the town and colony. He shows the absurdity of this, by stating that, both at Frederica and Savannah, not more than seven minutes were spent in reading the public morning and evening prayers. Fourteen minutes daily, in two public services, could hardly be considered an unreasonable taxation of the people's time. Wesley writes: "These cannot be termed long prayers: no Christian assembly ever used shorter." And then he naively informs

[1] Rev. C. Wesley's Journal, vol. i., p. 5.

[2] Thomas and Beata Hawkins sailed to Georgia in the same ship as Wesley (Clarke's "Wesley Family," vol. ii., p. 177). Hawkins was a surgeon. His wife was a virago, who well-nigh murdered two constables at Frederica, by breaking a brace of bottles on their heads (*Methodist Magazine*, abridg. edit., 1862, p. 500).

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Oglethorpe that these short prayers had no repetitions in them! We should think not![1]

Within a month after his return to Savannah, Wesley began to carry out his high church principles. He refused to baptize a child of Mr. Parker's, second bailiff of the town, because the parents objected to its being dipped. On Sundays, he divided the public prayers, according to the original appointment of the Church; reading the morning service at five; the communion office and a sermon at eleven; and the evening service at three. He also commenced visiting his parishioners in order, from house to house, setting apart for this purpose three hours every day.

He had no sooner begun, however, than his brother, wearied with his life at Frederica, and full of abhorrence at the false-heartedness of the people,[2] unexpectedly presented himself at Savannah. Places were exchanged, and John and Delamotte instantly started off to the forsaken flock. They arrived at Frederica on May 22nd, and remained until June 23rd. During this brief visit, Wesley read the commendatory prayer over Mrs. Germain, at the point of death; made Mr. Lassel's will; arranged a small society-meeting, like that which had been organised at Savannah; and reproved an officer of a man-of-war for swearing. One of his congregation said to him: "I like nothing you do; all your sermons are satires upon particular persons. Besides, we are Protestants: but as for you, we cannot tell what religion you are of. We never heard of such a religion before; we know not what to make of it. And then your private behaviour: all the quarrels that have been here since your arrival have been because of you; and there is neither man nor woman in the town who minds a word you say." The next day Wesley returned to Savannah.

He was no sooner back than a large party of Indians came, including several chiefs and an interpreter, with whom he had several interviews. He now hoped that a door was opened for the fulfilment of his intention to be a missionary among the heathen; but when he informed Oglethorpe of his

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xi., p. 39.
[2] Original letter in *Wesleyan Times*, Jan. 30, 1865.

purpose, the general objected, on the ground that there was great danger of his being taken or killed by the French, and that it was inexpedient to leave Savannah without a minister. Wesley answered that, though the trustees of Georgia had appointed him to the office of minister of Savannah, this was done without his solicitation, desire, or knowledge; and that he should not continue longer than until his way was opened to go among the Indians. And so the matter ended. 1735 Age 33

On the 26th of July, after spending a little more than five months in Georgia, his brother Charles embarked for England. At the same time, Wesley went again to ill-natured Frederica, where he spent the next twelve weeks. Here he read, with Delamotte, Bishop Beveridge's "*Pandectæ Canonum Conciliorum*," and became more convinced than ever that both particular and general councils may err. He set up a small library; and as several Germans, through not understanding the English tongue, were unable to join in the public service, he agreed to meet them every day at noon, in his own house, where, in their own language, he expounded to them a chapter of the New Testament, and prayed with them. Finding, however, that his prospects of doing good at Frederica became less and less, he returned to Savannah on the 31st of October, where he continued until the beginning of 1737.

Meanwhile, Wesley's friends in England did not forget him. The following was from his old acquaintance, Mr. Morgan, and is now for the first time given to the public.

"OXON, *November* 27, 1735.

"DEAR SIR,— . . . Be pleased to let Mr. Ingham know that I intend going to Yorkshire, if not hindered by my father. God has made Mr. Dickison the instrument of awakening his landlord and landlady. I read to them at Mr. Fox's an hour every other day, in the Bishop of Man's Catechism. Mr. Fox and his wife, especially the former, are most zealous Christians; and are earnestly bent on going to Georgia. So is Mr. Dickison, who is 'an Israelite indeed in whom there is no guile.' I do not doubt but we shall be able to send you a colony of thorough good Christians. I have undertaken the care of Bocardo. I go there three days in the week, and Mr. Broughton a fourth. I read every Sunday night to a cheerful number of Christians at Mr. Fox's. I could say a great deal respecting our meetings, etc.; but I am obliged to steal even this time from the holy Scriptures, in which I find more and more comfort every day. Indeed, the Lord's kingdom increaseth apace. My love to your brother,

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and Mr. Ingham, and Mr. Delamotte; and best respects to Mr. Oglethorpe. I should be very glad if you could spare me some of your prayers, or anything else which may be of service to me.

"I am, your brother in Christ Jesus,

"RICHARD MORGAN.

"To the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, in Georgia."

Another unpublished letter lies before us, written by Sir John Thorold, and breathing a most Christian spirit. Omitting what is purely sentimental, we give the following extracts:—

"LONDON, ST. JAMES'S PALACE, *May* 24, 1736.

"DEAR SIR,—I am unwilling to lose the opportunity of writing to you, by Capt. Thompson, and inquiring after the welfare of yourself, your brother, Mr. Ingham, Mr. Delamotte, and the whole colony of Georgia. I have read the journal of your voyage to that new settlement, and can, with pleasure, discern the footsteps of Divine Providence towards you. . . . Our dear friend Mr. Broughton is curate at the Tower, and has undertaken to preach to the poor prisoners in Ludgate every Tuesday in the afternoon. Mr. Whitefield and Mr. Hervey propose to enter into holy orders this next ordination. May they become burning and shining lights in the Church! Sir John Phillips has been, for several weeks, hindered from attending the societies, by reason of sickness and infirmities. He piously allows Mr. Whitefield £20 per annum. Several of Mr. Broughton's late parishioners at Cowley forget not the assembling of themselves together. Your friends at Oxford continue to exhort and edify one another. Tell me what progress you make in spiritualizing your flock; and what probability there is of the Lord opening the door of faith to the Indians. . . . May the God of love keep you all knit together in the bond of charity, and may you at last receive a beautiful crown at the Lord's hand, and enter amongst angels and archangels, to sing everlasting songs of praise to the Lord Almighty. I desire your prayers for me and mine.

"J. THOROLD."

The next was from James Hutton:—

"*September* 3, 1736.

"DEAR SIR,—I am this day twenty-one years old. Mr. Whitefield has taken orders, and is in town to supply Mr. Broughton's places at the Tower and Ludgate prison. Mr. Broughton reads prayers every night to a religious society that meet in Wapping chapel. Mr. Morgan is obliged by his father's orders to study physic at Leyden, where the name of Wesley stinks as well as at Oxford. I had the happiness of seeing your good mother, who came to town, in her way from Gainsborough, to Mr Hall first, and thence very soon to Tiverton. Mr. Law visited her at Gainsborough, and again at London. Your mother desired her blessing to you, and would have wrote, but had no time. She prayed for you and blessed you. If all matters relating to receiving your fellowship are not

exact, write fresh ones, and send over. Take care to inquire carefully and strictly concerning the mission of the Moravian bishop. I will make what inquiries I can. A great deal depends upon the validity of ordinations."[1] 1736 Age 33

At the same time, Hervey at Oxford wrote:—"I am still a most weak corrupt creature. But, blessed be the unmerited mercy of God, and thanks be to your never-to-be-forgotten example, that I am what I am! You have been both a father and a friend to me. I heartily thank you, as for all other favours, so especially for teaching me Hebrew."[2]

William Chapman, a student of Pembroke College, wrote as follows:—"Your kind concern and repeated endeavours for my spiritual good, while at Oxford, will not suffer me to think that you have utterly lost all remembrance of me. I sit every evening with Mr. Hervey, that great champion of the Lord of hosts, and read five times a week to a religious society in St. Ebbs' parish. God and the angels be with you!"[3]

Wesley, before leaving England, had begun to read the mystics, and on November 23, 1736, addressed a long letter to his brother Samuel, showing that, though he had been in danger of embracing their bewildering heresies, he had now abandoned them. He writes:—

"I think the rock on which I had the nearest made shipwreck of the faith was the writings of the mystics; under which term I comprehend all, and only those, who slight any of the means of grace. I have drawn up a short scheme of their doctrines, and beg your thoughts upon it, as soon as you can conveniently. Give me them as particularly, fully, and strongly as your time will permit. They may be of consequence, not only to all this province, but to nations of Christians yet unborn.

"'All means are not necessary for all men: therefore each person must use such means, and such only, as he finds necessary for him. When the end is attained the means cease.'

"'Men utterly divested of free will, of self-love, and self-activity, are entered into the passive state, and enjoy such a contemplation as is not only above faith, but above sight—such as is entirely free from images, thoughts, and discourse, and never interrupted by sins of infirmity, or voluntary distractions. They have absolutely renounced their reason and understanding; else they could not be guided by a Divine light. They seek no clear or particular knowledge of anything, but only an obscure, general knowledge, which is far better.'

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1848, p. 1102.
[2] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 160. [3] Manuscript letter.

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"'Having thus attained the end, the means must cease. Hope is swallowed up in love. Sight, or something more than sight, takes the place of faith. All particular virtues they possess in the essence, and therefore need not the distinct exercise of them. They work likewise all good works essentially, not accidentally, and use all outward means, only as they are moved thereto.'

"'Public prayer, or any forms, they need not; for they pray without ceasing. Sensible devotion in any prayer they despise; it being a great hindrance to perfection. The Scripture they need not read; for it is only His letter, with whom they converse face to face. Neither do they need the Lord's supper; for they never cease to *remember* Christ in the most acceptable manner.'"

Such was the mystified balderdash which Wesley had been in danger of adopting. He concludes his letter thus:—

"May God deliver you and yours from all error, and all unholiness! My prayers will never, I trust, be wanting for you. I am, dear brother, my sister's and your

"Most affectionate brother,
"JOHN WESLEY."[1]

At the end of the year 1736, Wesley and Delamotte set out, on foot, to Cowpen, missed their way, walked through a cypress swamp, with the water breast high, and slept on the ground in their wet clothes, which during the night were frozen, and in the morning were white as snow. They then started for Frederica, fell short of provisions, used bear's flesh, and proved it to be wholesome. Arriving on January 5, 1737, they found the people, as they expected, cold and heartless. Wesley's life was repeatedly threatened; and, after spending twenty more days in this unhappy place, he departed from Frederica for ever. In his passage to Savannah he read a volume containing the works of Nicholas Machiavel, and formed the deliberate opinion, "that if all the other doctrines of devils, which have been committed to writing, were collected together in one volume, it would fall short of this; and that should a prince form himself by this book, so calmly recommending hypocrisy, treachery, lying, robbery, oppression, adultery, whoredom, and murder of all kinds, Domitian or Nero would be an angel of light compared to that man."

Wesley had now been fifty-two weeks in America, twenty-four of which he had spent at Savannah, and the rest at

[1] Priestley's Letters, p. 63.

Frederica and at other places between the two. He remained forty-six weeks longer. How was he occupied? And what were his troubles? 1737 Age 34

Delamotte was teaching between thirty and forty children at Savannah to read, write, and cast accounts, and Wesley catechized them every Saturday and Sunday afternoon. Every sabbath he had three public services, at five in the morning, twelve at mid-day, and three in the afternoon; and then at night as many of his parishioners as desired it met at his house, with whom he spent an hour in prayer, singing, and mutual exhortation. A similar meeting was held in the same place every Wednesday night, and selecter ones on all the other evenings of the week.

There being no immediate prospect of commencing a mission among the heathen, Wesley, Delamotte, and Ingham consulted together, and agreed that the last mentioned should return to England; and accordingly, after spending exactly fifty-five weeks in Georgia, he embarked for home, having literally done next to nothing either for the colonists or the Indians, with the exception of composing, in Dr. Byrom's shorthand, a catalogue of half the words in the Indian language,[1] in a house built for him near the Indian town, a few miles from Savannah. The chief object of sending Ingham to England was to obtain more help for the colonists. In a letter dated February 16, 1737, and addressed to a friend in Lincoln College, Oxford, Wesley writes:—

"There is great need that God should put it into the hearts of some to come over to us, and labour with us in His harvest. But I should not desire any to come unless on the same views and conditions with us; without any temporal wages, other than food and raiment, the plain conveniences of life. For one or more, in whom was this mind, there would be full employment in the province: either in assisting Mr. Delamotte or me, while we were present here; or in supplying our places when abroad; or in visiting the poor people in the smaller settlements as well as at Frederica, all of whom are as sheep without a shepherd.

"By these labours of love might any that desired it be trained up for the harder task of preaching the gospel to the heathen. The difficulties he must then encounter God only knows; probably martyrdom would conclude them. But those we have hitherto met with have been small. Persecution, you know, is the portion of every follower of Christ, wherever his lot is cast; but it has hitherto extended no farther than words with

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1863, p. 731.

1737 Age 34 regard to us, unless in one or two inconsiderable instances. Still, every man that would come hither ought to be willing and ready to embrace the severer kinds of it."[1]

Meanwhile, Oglethorpe's troubles had begun. From a letter which Wesley wrote to him, on February 24, 1737, we learn that Sir Robert Walpole had turned against the general, and parliament had resolved to make a strict scrutiny into Georgian affairs. The trustees had charged Oglethorpe with misapplying moneys, and with abusing his entrusted power. Wesley adds: "Perhaps in some things you have shown you are but a man: perhaps I myself may have a little to complain of: but oh what a train of benefits have I received to lay in the balance against it! I bless God that ever you was born. I acknowledge His exceeding mercy in casting me into your hands. I own your generous kindness all the time we were at sea. I am indebted to you for a thousand favours here. Though all men should revile you, yet will not I."[2]

Sinister rumours were circulated in reference to Wesley, as well as Oglethorpe. Hence the following hitherto unpublished letter, endorsed by Wesley thus:—"The Trustees' Letter, June 17, 1737, fully acquitting me:"—

"*Trustees of Georgia to the Rev. J. Wesley.*

"GEORGIA OFFICE, *June* 15, 1737.

"SIR,—The Rev. Mr. Burton has this day laid before the trustees a letter from you to them, dated Savannah, March 4, 1737, wherein you express a concern that they should receive an accusation of your embezzling any part of their goods, and likewise a desire to know the name of your accuser.

"The trustees have ordered me to assure you, that they are very much surprised at any apprehensions you have of such accusation being brought before them. No complaint of any kind has been laid before them relating to you. They have never as a board, nor has any of them privately, heard of one; nor have they the least suspicion of any ground for one. They would not (if they had received any) form a judgment of you without acquainting you with the accusation, and the name of the accuser. At the same time, they believe you will think it reasonable to let them know who has informed you that any such accusation has been brought before them, and that, for the future, you will not believe nor listen to any private informations or insinuations, that must make you uneasy, and may lead you to distrust the justice of the trustees, and the regard they have for you.

[1] *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1737, p. 575.
[2] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 39.

"The trustees are very sensible of the great importance of the work you have engaged in; and they hope God will prosper the undertaking, and support you in it; for they have much at heart, not only the success of the colony in general, but the progress of piety among the people, as well as the conversion of the Indians. They are very glad to find that Mr. Causton has seconded your endeavours to suppress vice and immorality, and that a reformation gains ground, as you observe it does. The trustees will take into consideration your application in favour of Robert Haws, and have a regard to it. 1737 — Age 34

"I am, sir, your most obedient servant,

"BENJAMIN MARTIN, *Secretary.*"

The following letter, also now first published, refers to the same subject, besides containing other information which we hope will be found not devoid of interest. It was addressed to "The Rev. Mr. John Wesley, at Savannah, in Georgia:"—

"OSSET, *October* 19, 1737.

"DEAR BROTHER,—By your silence one would suspect that you were offended at my last letter. Am I your enemy because I tell you the truth? But perhaps I was too severe. Forgive me then. However, I am sure that, by soaring too high in your own imaginations, you have had a great downfall in your spiritual progress. Be lowly, therefore, in your own eyes. Humble yourself before the Lord, and He will lift you up. I do assure you it is out of pure love, and with concern, that I write. I earnestly wish your soul's welfare. O pray for mine also. The Lord preserve you!

"Could you, think you, live upon the income of your fellowship? If you can, do. The trustees are indeed very willing to support you, and they take it ill that anybody should say you have been too expensive. But the Bishop of London (as I have heard), and some others, have been offended at your expenses. And not indeed altogether without reason, because you declared at your leaving England that you should want scarcely anything. I just give you these hints. Pray for direction, and then act as you judge best.

"Charles is so reserved: I know little about him: he neither writes to me, nor comes to see me: what he intends is best known to himself. Mr. Hutton's family go on exceedingly well. Your friend Mr. Morgan (I hear) either has, or is about publishing a book, to prove that every one baptized with water is regenerate. All friends at Oxford go on well. Mr. Kinchin, Mr. Hutchins, Mr. Washington, Bell, Turney, Hervey, Watson, are all zealous. Mr. Atkinson labours under severe trials in Westmoreland; but is steady, and sincere, and an excellent Christian. Dick Smith is weak, but not utterly gone. Mr. Robson, and Grieves, are but indifferent: the latter is married to a widow, and teaching school at Northampton. Mr. Thompson, of Queen's, has declared his resolution of following Christ.

"Remember me to Mr. Wallis, Mark Hind, and the Davison family,

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Mrs. Gilbert Mears, Mr. Campbell, Mr. and Mrs. Burnside, Mr. and Mrs. Williamson.

"Yours in Christ,
"BENJAMIN INGHAM."

Wesley's ideas of religion, at this period, may be gathered from the following extracts from a letter, dated "Savannah, March 28, 1737," and addressed to "William Wogan, Esq., in Spring Gardens, London."[1]

"I entirely agree with you, that religion is love, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; that, as it is the happiest, so it is the cheerfulest thing in the world; that it is utterly inconsistent with moroseness, sourness, severity, and indeed with whatever is not according to the softness, sweetness, and gentleness of Christ Jesus. I believe it is equally contrary to all preciseness, stiffness, affectation, and unnecessary singularity. I allow, too, that prudence, as well as zeal, is of the utmost importance in the Christian life. But I do not yet see any possible case wherein trifling conversation can be an instance of it. In the following scriptures I take all such to be flatly forbidden: Matt. xii. 36; Eph. v. 4, and iv. 29; Col. iv. 6.

"That I shall be laughed at for this, I know; so was my Master. I am not for a stern, austere manner of conversing. No: let all the cheerfulness of faith be there, all the joyfulness of hope, all the amiable sweetness—the winning easiness of love. If we must have art, '*Hic mihi erunt artes.*'"

Again, in another letter, written to Mrs. Chapman a day later, he says:—

"You seem to apprehend that I believe religion to be inconsistent with cheerfulness, and with a social friendly temper. So far from it, that I am convinced, as true religion cannot be without cheerfulness, so steady cheerfulness cannot be without true religion. I am equally convinced that religion has nothing sour, austere, unsociable, unfriendly in it; but on the contrary, implies the most winning sweetness, the most amiable softness and gentleness. Are you for having as much cheerfulness as you can? So am I. Do you endeavour to keep alive your taste for all the truly innocent pleasures of life? So do I. Do you refuse no pleasure but what is a hindrance to some greater good, or has a tendency to some evil? It is my very rule. In particular, I pursue this rule in eating, which I seldom do without much pleasure. I know it is the will of God that I should enjoy every pleasure that leads to my taking pleasure in Him, and in such a measure as most leads to it. We are to do nothing but what, directly or indirectly, leads to our holiness; and to do every such thing with this design, and in such a measure as may most promote it.

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1842, p. 657.

"I am not mad, my dear friend, for asserting these to be the words of truth and soberness; neither are any of those, either in England or here, who have hitherto attempted to follow me. I am and must be an example to my flock; not indeed in my prudential rules, but, in some measure, in my spirit and life and conversation. Yet all of them are, in your sense of the word, unlearned, and most of them of low understanding; and still not one of them has been, as yet, in any case of conscience which was not solved. As to the nice distinctions you speak of, it is you, my friend, who are lost in them. We have no need of nice distinctions; for I exhort all, and dispute with none. I feed my brethren in Christ, as He giveth me power, with the pure, unmixed milk of the word; and those who are as little children receive it, not as the word of man, but as the word of God."[1] 1737 Age 34

These are important letters, as tending to refute the commonly received opinion, that, at this period of his history, Wesley was morose, sour, gloomy, and in fact thought that cheerfulness was inconsistent with religion. His views and some of his practices might seem to many to be peculiar; but he was a cheerful and happy man, even amid the vigils, fastings, and solitudes of Georgia. Some of his views were novel, but they were not incompatible with happiness. He writes: "When I first landed at Savannah, a gentlewoman said, 'I assure you, sir, you will see as *well dressed* a congregation on Sunday as most you have seen in London.' I did so; and soon after I took occasion to expound those scriptures which relate to dress; and all the time that I afterward ministered at Savannah, I saw neither gold in the church, nor costly apparel, but the congregation in general was almost constantly clothed in plain clean linen or woollen."[2] This wears an aspect of anchorite severity, but still Wesley and his plain-robed followers were happy.

In April, 1737, Wesley began to learn the Spanish language, in order to converse with his Jewish parishioners. Easter being in the same month, he "had every day in this great and holy week a sermon and the holy communion." Finding that a clergyman in Carolina had been marrying some of his (Wesley's) parishioners, without either banns or licence, he set out for Charlestown to put a stop to such proceedings. Mr. Garden, the Bishop of London's commissary, assured him

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 44. [2] Ibid. vol. xi., p. 455.

1737 Age 34 he would take care no such irregularity should be committed for the future. At Garden's request, Wesley preached a sermon on, "whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world"; which led a man of education and character to object—"Why if this be Christianity, a Christian must have more courage than Alexander the Great."

Returning to Savannah, in the month of May, Wesley found one of his congregation, who had been exemplarily religious, turned a deist; and expressed the opinion that bad a religion as Popery is, no religion is worse; and that a baptized infidel is two-fold worse than even a bigoted papist. This was only one of Wesley's trials. A wicked woman, whom he had offended, decoyed him into her house, threw him down, and, with her scissors, cut off from one side of his head the whole of those long locks of auburn hair, which he had been accustomed to keep in the most perfect order. After this, he preached at Savannah with his hair long on one side and short on the other, those sitting on the side which had been cut observing, "What a cropped head of hair the young parson has."[1]

At Whitsuntide, four of his scholars, after being instructed daily for several weeks, were admitted to the Lord's table, and many of the other children evinced a remarkable seriousness in their behaviour and conversation. This was doubtless a cause of great joy both to Wesley and his friend Delamotte, each of whom taught a school, and, like all schoolmasters, met with discouragements. A part of the boys in Delamotte's school wore stockings and shoes, and the others not. The former ridiculed the latter. Delamotte tried to put a stop to this uncourteous banter, but told Wesley he had failed. Wesley replied, "I think I can cure it. If you will take charge of my school next week I will take charge of yours, and will try." The exchange was made, and on Monday morning Wesley went into school barefoot. The children seemed surprised, but without any reference to past jeerings Wesley kept them at their work. Before the week was ended, the shoeless ones began to gather courage; and some of the others, seeing their minister and master come without shoes

[1] *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1792, p. 24.

and stockings, began to copy his example, and thus the evil was effectually cured."[1] 1737 Age 34

In the early summer of 1737, Whitefield wrote to Wesley, telling him of his success in England. A young country lad had brought him a peck of apples seven miles upon his back, as a token of gratitude for the benefit he had derived from Whitefield's ministry, and had such a sense of the Divine presence that he walked, for the most part, with his hat off his head. God was also moving on the hearts of some young ladies. Whitefield continues:—

"The devil, I find, has a particular spite against weekly communion; but I am in hope we shall have the sacrament administered every Sunday at the cathedral. It would have been mentioned to the bishop ere now, but Oxford friends advised to defer it till next summer.

"But now I have mentioned the bishop: alas! how should I tremble to tell you how I have been continually disturbed with thoughts, that I, a worm taken from a common public-house, should, ere I die, be one myself. Your earnest prayers, surely, will not be wanting for me, that I may not split on that most dangerous of all rocks—worldly ambition. Parsonages, I believe, are providing for me; but I trust Satan will never catch me by pluralities, or induce me to take upon me anything inconsistent with the duty of a disciple of Jesus Christ. I hope our friends all continue steadfast and zealous at Oxford. My love to the young merchant, whose example I hope we shall all be enabled to follow, if God requires our assistance in Georgia. O may you go on and prosper, and, in the strength of God, make the devil's kingdom shake about his ears! I received benefit by your father's 'Advice to a Young Clergyman.'"[2]

Whitefield's dream about being made a bishop is amusing; and yet Providence and grace made him greater than a bishop.

Wesley still felt intensely anxious respecting the heathen. In July he met a Frenchman, who had lived several months among the Chicasaws, and wrote to Dr. Humphreys as follows:—[3]

"Concerning the conversion of the heathen, where is the seed sown, the *sanguis martyrum?* Do we hear of any who have sealed the faith with their blood in all this vast continent? Or do we read of any church flourishing in any age or nation without this seed first sown there? Give me leave, sir, to speak my thoughts freely. When God shall put it into the hearts of some of His servants, whom He hath already delivered from

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1808, p. 490. [2] Ibid. 1798, p. 358.
[3] Ibid. 1855, p. 426.

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earthly hopes and fears, to join hand in hand in this labour of love; when out of these He shall have chosen one or more, to magnify Him in the sight of the heathen by dying, not with a stoical or Indian indifference, but blessing and praying for their murderers, and praising God in the midst of flame with joy unspeakable and full of glory, then the rest, waxing bold by their sufferings, shall go forth in the name of the Lord God, and by the power of His might cast down every high thing that exalteth itself against the faith of Christ. Then shall ye see Satan, the grand ruler of this New World, as lightning fall from heaven!"

Oh for missionaries like these! Wesley's notions are right. Men going merely because others send them, or men going merely to obtain a livelihood, are not the men to convert the inhabitants of lands like Africa, India, Japan, and China. To make an impression there, men must be animated with the martyrs' spirit. Church history, including the history of missions, affords abundant proof of this. Mere duty-doing ministers are bad enough in England, but they are vastly worse when among the heathen. Money spent upon them there is worse than wasted; for their cold perfunctory labours produce, upon the whole, a bad effect instead of good. The greatest boon the church could now receive from the hands of God would be a multiplication of ministers and missionaries like those which Wesley was sighing for in Georgia.

From Wesley's private manuscript journal, we learn that in July, by going from house to house, he took a census of his parishioners, and computed that there were in Savannah 518 inhabitants, of whom 149 were under sixteen years of age. Frederica was without a minister, though three hundred acres of land had been granted by the trustees for a church establishment in that unhappy town.[1] Other places with scanty populations were equally destitute. New Ebenezer had the Moravians; and Darien had Mr. M'Leod, a serious, resolute, and pious Presbyterian: but this seems to have been all the ministerial agency existing in Georgia. Hence the following letter, addressed by Wesley to his friends at Oxford:—

"SAVANNAH, *September* 8, 1737.

". . . Long since, I begun to visit my parishioners in order, from house to house; but I could not go on two days longer. The sick were

[1] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 324.

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increasing so fast as to require all the time I had to spare—from one to five in the afternoon. Nor is even that enough to see them all, as I would do, daily. In Frederica and all the smaller settlements here are above five hundred sheep almost without a shepherd. What a single man can do is neither seen nor felt. Where are ye who are very zealous for the Lord of hosts? Who will rise up with me against the wicked? Whose spirit is moved within him to prepare himself for publishing glad tidings to those on whom the Sun of Righteousness never yet arose? Do you ask what you shall have? Why, all you desire: food to eat, raiment to put on, a place where to lay your head, and a crown of life that fadeth not away! Do you seek means of building up yourselves in the knowledge and love of God? I know of no place under heaven where there are more than in this place. Does your heart burn within you to turn many others to righteousness? Behold, the whole land, thousands of thousands are before you! I will resign to any of you all or any part of my charge. Choose what seemeth good in your own eyes. There are within these walls children of all ages and dispositions. Who will bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, till they are meet to be preachers of righteousness? Here are adults from the farthest parts of Europe, and Asia, and the inmost kingdoms of Africa; add to these the known and unknown nations of this vast continent, and you will indeed have a great multitude which no man can number."[1]

While Wesley was thus longing for help, events were transpiring, by which he himself within three months was driven out of Georgia, and obliged to return to England. This was the closing scene in Wesley's missionary life, and though a painful one it must not be shirked. All the facts in the writer's possession shall be given, and the reader shall have materials to form his own opinion. The chief actors in the scene, besides Wesley himself, were Sophia Christiana Hopkey, Thomas Causton, and William Williamson.

Causton was one of the first company of emigrants, and landed in Georgia with Oglethorpe, in February, 1733. He was a man of no substance, and his character was not as good as it might have been. In fact, he left England in disgrace, having practised a fraud upon the public revenue. He was naturally proud, covetous, cunning, and deceitful. By his clever rascality he wriggled himself into Oglethorpe's favour, and, on the arrival of the few emigrant gaol-birds in the Savannah river, was appointed a sort of dictator of the infant settlement, and had charge of the stores which the trustees sent

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1844, p. 922.

1737 Age 34 over for the use of the colonists. We have already seen that, even when Wesley left for England at the end of the year 1737, the inhabitants of Savannah were not more than 518 in number, of whom only 369 were adult males and females. This was no large kingdom; but Thomas Causton was a large man, because he was at the head of it. Indeed, the molehill empire seems to have magnified itself to the utmost extent possible, by the introduction of law, the establishment of courts, the appointment of officers, the election of juries, and the adoption of everything else within its power which was likely to make it a pompous minikin miniature of the great system of government at home. Causton was "chief magistrate," and of course a "chief" had subordinates under him. There was a recorder, also a bailiff. There were constables, and tithingmen, and other great functionaries, all armed with solemn authority to rule, govern, and keep in order, first themselves, and then about five hundred men, women, and children, including John Wesley the Oxford priest, and Charles Delamotte the merchant master of almost a ragged school.

"The ocean is in tempest tossed,
To waft a feather and to drown a fly."

Of all the great powers, however, in this log-built village of five hundred souls, Thomas Causton, in his own estimation, and in fact, was greatest. The other Tom Thumb magistrates were ciphers in his august presence. Sometimes, indeed, he would ask their opinion in public on the state matters of the great city of Savannah; but it was principally to have the pleasure of uttering an opinion of his own, directly opposite to theirs. Juries he threatened without the least compunction, and especially when their verdicts disagreed with his inclinations. As his power increased, so did his pride, haughtiness, and cruelty. The court in which this fraudulent refugee—we beg his pardon, this "chief magistrate"—expounded law and dispensed justice, was guarded by eight freeholders, with an officer to direct their movements, all armed with guns and bayonets. Seated, in such high dignity, and so far above his fellows, upon the judicial bench, it was beneath his office to sit uncovered; and hence he almost invariably wore his hat, even when administering an

oath. Should any foolish wight be bold enough to oppose, in the least degree, his arbitrary proceedings, the "chief magistrate" at once threatened the impudent recusant with the stocks, the whipping-post, and a lodging in the log-house prison. Even his fellow officials were treated with scant respect. In December, 1734, the trustees sent a Mr. Gordon from England, to act as magistrate; but Causton, not liking a compeer, refused him provisions from the store, and he was obliged to leave. Indeed, Causton, who had sufficient cleverness to induce Oglethorpe, despite his roguery in England, to make him magistrate in Savannah, seems to have used the same worldly cunning in allowing none to be his subordinates except those whom he could, with the utmost ease, twist to his own purposes. Mr. Bailiff Parker, mentioned in Wesley's journal, had nothing to support himself and his large family, except what he earned by his daily labour as a sawyer. He was a man of no education, and was an absolute slave to liquor. Another bailiff was a man of the name of Daru, nearly seventy years old, and crazed in both body and mind; and another was R. Gilbert, who could neither read nor write. Causton's despotic career was of short duration. The same grand jury which found, under Causton's guidance, ten bills against Wesley, immediately proceeded to examine the official doings of their own illustrious "chief magistrate;" and found charges against him, to the effect that he had grossly abused his power as keeper of the public stores, and that he had hindered people settling on the lands that the trustees had allotted them. These and other charges, dated September 1, 1737, were sent to England; and the result was—Causton, in October, 1738, was turned out of all his offices, and the store was sold to pay the trustees' debts; Causton's certified accounts were refused by the trustees as incorrect; William Williamson was made recorder, and Henry Parker (the drunken uneducated sawyer above mentioned) was made first magistrate; and, finally, Causton, the great man who prosecuted Wesley, and drove him from Georgia, settled down at Oxstead, three miles from Savannah; and there, we hope, he lived a more honest life than he had done in England.[1]

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[1] These facts concerning Causton are taken from "A True and

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Sophia Christiana Hopkey was the niece of Thomas Causton's wife. William Williamson, who became her husband, was a young adventurer, who arrived in Georgia a short time after Wesley did.[1] And now, with these explanations, let us look at the miserable business, which, in a life of Wesley, cannot be omitted.

Wesley landed in Georgia on February 5, 1736, and seems at once to have become acquainted with Miss Hopkey. Oglethorpe, Charles Wesley, Ingham, and fifty other settlers set out immediately for Frederica. The young lady went with them; and, on March 22, Wesley wrote to his brother concerning her as follows: "I conjure you, spare no time, no address or pains, to learn the true cause of the former distress of my friend. I much doubt you are in the right. God forbid that she should again, in like manner, miss the mark. Watch over her; keep her as much as possible. Write to me, how I ought to write to her."[2]

Miss Hopkey was a young lady of good sense, and elegant in person and manners. She was introduced to Wesley as a sincere inquirer after salvation, and soon took every possible opportunity of being in his company, and requested him to assist her in studying French. Oglethorpe also did his best to help on a courtship. Meanwhile, Wesley was seized with fever, which confined him for nearly a week; and the young lady (who would hardly allow Delamotte to do anything for his friend) attended him night and day. She even consulted Oglethorpe what kind of female dress Wesley liked the best, and therefore came always dressed in white, neatly and simply elegant. Young Delamotte began to be suspicious, and asked Wesley if he meant to marry Miss Hopkey. Delamotte's question puzzled Wesley, but, perceiving that Delamotte was prejudiced against the lady, he waived an answer. The next step taken was to consult David Nitschmann, the Moravian bishop. Nitschmann's answer was: "Marriage is not unlawful; but whether it is now expedient for you, and whether this

Historical Narrative of the Colony of Georgia," published in 1741, by a number of colonists living on the spot, and all of whom were unfriendly to Wesley.

[1] *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1792, p. 23.

[2] Whitehead's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 15.

lady is a proper wife for you, ought to be maturely weighed." Wesley's perplexity was increased, and he now resolved to submit the matter to the elders of the Moravian church. When he entered the house where they were met together, he found Delamotte in the midst of them. On naming his business, Nitschmann said: "We have considered your case; will you abide by our decision?" After some hesitation, Wesley replied, "I will." "Then," said Nitschmann, "we advise you to proceed no further in the matter!" Wesley answered, "The will of the Lord be done!" "From this time," says Henry Moore, "he avoided everything that tended to continue the intimacy with Miss Hopkey, and behaved with the greatest caution towards her."[1] 1737 Age 34

The whole of this is painfully ludicrous. Mr. Moore, in a manuscript letter before us, says that he had the account from Wesley's own lips, and that he is not aware that it was ever given to any one except himself. He adds that Dr. Coke knew nothing of it, and that Wesley refrained from publishing the whole of the affair in his printed journal, *chiefly* through tenderness to General Oglethorpe. It might be so; but we greatly doubt the correctness of Moore's assertion, that, from the time Wesley consulted the Moravian elders, he "avoided everything that tended to continue the intimacy." Wesley was in love, and, like all lovers, he did, not wicked, but foolish things. Let us look at some other facts.

At this period, the summer of 1736, Wesley's method of preaching, and his manner of life, excited great attention in the small settlement of Savannah; and there were not a few who charged him with making the people idle by summoning them so frequently to public prayers. His more than ordinary friendship with Miss Hopkey was also a subject of common conversation.[2] He was looked upon as a Roman Catholic—(1) Because he rigidly excluded all Dissenters from the holy communion, until they first gave up their faith and principles, and, like Richard Turner and his sons, submitted to be re-baptized by him; (2) Because Roman Catholics were received by him as saints; (3) Because he endeavoured to establish

[1] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 312.
[2] "The Progress of Methodism in Bristol." 1743.

1737 Age 34 and enforce confession, penance, and mortification; mixed wine with water at the sacrament; and appointed deaconesses in accordance with what he called the Apostolic Constitutions.[1] He was, in point of fact, a Puseyite, a hundred years before Dr. Pusey flourished.

Miss Hopkey was put under his ghostly care. She was one of his early morning congregation, and constantly went to his lodgings, in order to be further instructed.[2] He fell in love with her; and there can be little doubt that he made proposals to marry her, and, if his own inclinations had been carried out, the marriage would have been completed.[3] The following extracts are taken from his unpublished journal.

1736. October 16.—Frederica. "Poor Miss Sophy was scarce the shadow of what she was when I left her. I endeavoured to convince her of it, but in vain. And to put it effectually out of my power to do so, she was resolved to return to England immediately. I tried to divert her from her fatal resolution of going to England, and, after several fruitless attempts, I at length prevailed. Nor was it long before she more than recovered the ground she had lost."

"October 25.—I took boat for Savannah with Miss Sophy."

"In the beginning of December, I advised Miss Sophy to sup earlier, and not immediately before she went to bed. She did so, and on this little circumstance what an inconceivable train of consequences depend. Not only—

'All the colour of my remaining life'

for her; but perhaps all my happiness too, in time and in eternity."

"February 5, 1737.—One of the most remarkable dispensations of Providence towards me began to show itself this day. For many days after, I could not at all judge which way the scale would turn; nor was it fully determined till March 4th, on which day God commanded me to pull out my right eye; and, by His grace, I determined to do so: but, being slack in the execution, on Saturday, March 12th, God being very merciful to me, my friend performed what I could not."

What is the meaning of this? Two other extracts from the same journal will show.

"March 7.—I walked with Mr. Causton to his country lot, and plainly felt that, had God given me such a retirement with the companion I desired, I should have forgot the work for which I was born, and have set up my rest in this world."

[1] "A True and Historical Narrative of the Colony of Georgia." 1741.
[2] *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1792, p. 23.
[3] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 320.

"March 8.—Miss Sophy engaged herself to Mr. Williamson, a person not remarkable for handsomeness, neither for greatness, neither for wit, or knowledge, or sense, and least of all for religion; and on Saturday, March 12th" [four days after!] "they were married at Purrysburg,—this being the day which completed the year from my first speaking to her. What Thou doest, O God, I know not now, but I shall know hereafter." 1737 — Age 34

Such is Wesley's own statement. The disappointment was a most painful blow. Forty-nine years after, he wrote, in reference to this event, "I remember when I read these words in the church at Savannah, 'Son of man, behold, I take from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke,' I was pierced through as with a sword, and could not utter a word more. But our comfort is, He that made the heart can heal the heart."[1] He also wrote to his brother Samuel at the time, who replied, "I am sorry you are disappointed in the match, because you are very unlikely to find another."[2]

With this evidence before us, it is difficult to give credence to Henry Moore's assertion, "that Wesley never allowed himself to *determine* on a marriage with Miss Hopkey."[3] But in addition to all this, there is the testimony of the young lady herself, contained in her affidavit, given to the Savannah court, and which Wesley inserts in the private journal already mentioned. In that document she avers that she was committed to the care of Mr. John Wesley, the missionary, by her relatives; that he proposed marriage to her; and that he further proposed that, as she might not like his present wandering way of life, he would settle in Savannah. She adds that, about three days before she married Williamson, she was visited by Wesley, who urged her to tell him whether she had not been overpersuaded or forced to agree to marry Williamson by her friends, and whether such a marriage might not still be prevented. He also added that, if there was anything in his way of life (by which she understood him to mean fastings and other mortifications), which she disliked, he would make all these things easy to her, in case she would consent to marry him.

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 118.
[2] Whitehead's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 30.
[3] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 320.

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Such is the substance of Sophy's statement. How is it possible, in the face of all this, to believe Henry Moore's statement, that there was no intimacy between Wesley and Miss Hopkey, from the time that he consulted the Moravian elders?

We grudge the space that has been devoted to this subject; but perhaps the following reasons will be accepted by the reader, as an apology for the tax upon his patience.

1. The matter, though trivial in itself, has been made important by the conflicting statements of the biographers. Mr. Moore says Wesley never came to the determination to marry her. Dr. Whitehead says he did intend to marry her. Southey agrees with Whitehead; Mr. Watson presumes that Mr. Moore is a better authority than Dr. Whitehead; Mr. Jackson seems to think the same. We have given all the facts within our reach, and leave the reader to form his own opinion.

2. Though the courtship of young people is an ordinary, commonplace sort of thing, inconceivably great events were dependent upon the result of this. John Wesley was thirty-three years old, and was perfectly justified in seeking to obtain a wife; neither is there anything to be found fault with in his intercourse with Miss Hopkey, unless it was his silly simplicity in asking the opinion, if not consent, of the Moravians. The young lady, also, was beautiful, and accomplished, and, to all human appearance, pious. Her uncle was a respectable rascal; but that was no fault of hers. We know nothing to her prejudice before she became a wife, except that it might have been more decorously prudent if she had allowed Delamotte to nurse Wesley in his fever instead of doing it, day and night, herself; and that there was certainly an impetuous haste, not to be commended, in her marrying Mr. Williamson only four days after he first proposed to her. Excepting this, the friendship, courtship, or whatever else the reader likes to call it, between Wesley and his "poor Sophy" seems to have been sincere, pure, honourable, and, in the opinion of Oglethorpe, who was not ill qualified to judge, desirable. But, supposing the courtship had ended in marriage, is it likely that we should ever have heard of Wesley at Bristol, Kingswood, Kennington Common, and Moorfields? Is it likely

that there would ever have been any "United Societies of the People called Methodists"? Should we have ever heard of either the Methodism of the past or present? Perhaps an equally great work might have been witnessed; but the great Head of the church must have wrought it by other agencies and means; for had John Wesley married Sophia Christiana Hopkey, the probability is that, instead of returning to England and beginning the greatest religious revival of modern times, he would have settled in Georgia, and, like another Xavier, have spent a most spiritual and devoted life in converting Indian and other kinds of heathen. The results of such a life might have been glorious. Who can tell what might have been its influence upon the civilisation and perpetuation of the nobly formed aboriginal inhabitants of the vast American continent? Would America, in the decline of the nineteenth century, have been inhabited by European strangers, or by educated, civilised, hardworking, prosperous descendants of the wild Indians of the woods? These are useless questions, because questions none of us can answer; but the mere suggestion of such points will serve to show that Wesley's courtship in Georgia was pregnant with infinite momentousness. "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad: clouds and darkness are round about Him; righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne" (Ps. xcvii. 1, 2). 1737 Age 34

3. Then a third reason, for dwelling at so great a length on Wesley's courtship, is, that the courtship was very improperly mixed up with the subsequent troubles which led to his almost forceful departure from the Georgian colony. But this brings us to the remainder of Wesley's Georgian history, which shall now be given as succinctly as possible.

We have already seen that Wesley was an extreme ritualist. He himself, nearly a dozen years subsequent to his flight from Georgia, gives us a specimen of his high church bigotry and intolerance. Having inserted in his journal a beautiful letter written to him by John Martin Bolzius, he, under the date of September, 1749, remarks: "What a truly Christian piety and simplicity breathe in these lines! And yet this very man, when I was at Savannah, did I refuse to admit to the Lord's table, because he was not baptized;

1737 Age 34 that is, not baptized by a minister who had been episcopally ordained. Can any one carry high church zeal higher than this? How well have I been since beaten with mine own staff!"

Wesley still paid pastoral attentions to Mrs. Williamson as one of his parishioners. Her not too accomplished husband took umbrage at this, and, eight days after her marriage, forbade her attending his place of worship, or ever to speak to him again.[2] Notwithstanding this interdict, however, we find her on the 3rd of July at a sacramental service, at the conclusion of which Wesley mentioned certain things which he thought reprovable in her behaviour. This made her extremely angry, and, three days later, Causton, accompanied by the bailiff and the recorder, came to demand an explanation. Wesley gave his visitors to understand that, in the execution of his office, and acting without respect of persons, he might find it necessary to repel one of Causton's family from the holy communion. He further told the "chief magistrate" what the people of Savannah were saying against his magisterial proceedings.[3] All this made the coming storm more threatening.

Some weeks elapsed; and then, on August 7, five months after her marriage, Wesley refused to allow Mrs. Williamson to join in the Lord's supper. The next day, Mr. Recorder issued a warrant for the apprehension of "John Wesley, clerk," and commanding the constables and tithingmen to bring him before one of the bailiffs of Savannah, to answer the complaint of William Williamson for defaming his wife, and refusing to administer to her the sacrament of the Lord's supper, in a public congregation, without cause; "by which the said William Williamson was damaged one thousand pounds sterling."

Wesley was arrested and brought before Mr. Bailiff Parker and Mr. Recorder Christie. His answer to the charge was, "that the giving or refusing the Lord's supper being a matter purely ecclesiastical, he could not acknowledge their power to

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. ii., p. 154.
[2] *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1792, p. 24; and Wesley's unpublished journal.
[3] Ibid.

interrogate him concerning it." The bailiff told him he must appear at the next Savannah court; and Williamson demanded bail for his appearance, but the officials ruled that Wesley's word was in itself sufficient. 1737 Age 34

Two days later, Causton called on Wesley, and demanded that he should send to Mrs. Williamson, in writing, "the reasons for repelling her before the whole congregation." Wesley complied, and wrote as follows:—

"*To Mrs. Sophia Williamson.*

"At Mr. Causton's request, I write once more. The rules whereby I proceed are these:—

"'So many as intend to be partakers of the holy communion shall signify their names to the curate, at least some time the day before.' This you did not do.

"'And if any of these have done any wrong to his neighbours, by word or deed, so that the congregation be thereby offended, the curate shall advertise him, that in anywise he presume not to come to the Lord's table until he hath openly declared himself to have truly repented.'

"If you offer yourself at the Lord's table on Sunday, I will advertise you (as I have done more than once) wherein you have done wrong. And when you have openly declared yourself to have truly repented, I will administer to you the mysteries of God.

"*August* 11, 1737. "JOHN WESLEY."

On receiving this, Causton began to read, to as many of the people as he could collect together, extracts from the letters which Wesley had written to himself or to his niece, from the beginning of their acquaintance, adding comments of his own, to Wesley's disadvantage. Others of Causton's family were assiduous in their endeavours to convince their neighbours that Wesley had repelled Mrs. Williamson from the communion because she had refused to marry him. In the midst of all this Wesley writes: "I sat still at home, and, I thank God, easy, having committed my cause to Him, and remembering His word, 'Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him."[1]

Meanwhile, Causton desired Mr. Burnside, the trustees' secretary, to sign a certificate to the effect that Mrs. William-

[1] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 326.

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son had been for ten months past as constant a communicant as any other, and that she had been of unblamable behaviour. Mr. Burnside said he could not sign it with a safe conscience, knowing it to be false. Upon which Causton severely reproached him, and discharged him from his employment. However, a number of names were procured to the certificate, though, Wesley adds, the first part of it was shamefully untrue, for Mrs. Williamson had omitted communicating nine times in three months; in other words, had only communicated once a month instead of once a week.[1]

The Savannah court was to sit on August 22, a fortnight after Wesley's arrest; and Causton employed his utmost power, and art, and application, in prejudicing the persons who were to form the grand jury. His table was free to the whole of them. Whatever they desired from the public stores was delivered to them. Old misunderstandings were forgotten, and nothing was too much to be done or promised for men who, a week before, were unable, from such a source, to procure even a crust of bread.

Six days previous to the opening of the court, Wesley, at the request of several of his communicants, read a short statement of the case, after the evening prayers, in the open congregation.[2]

At length the great day of trial, in this Lilliputian kingdom, came. The grand jury consisted of forty-four of the illustrious inhabitants, about a fifth part of the adult male population of Savannah. One was a Frenchman, ignorant of the English language; one a papist; one a professed infidel; three were Baptists; sixteen or seventeen others were Dissenters; and of the rest, several had personal quarrels against Wesley, and had openly vowed revenge.

Causton gave a long and earnest charge to the jury, "to beware of spiritual tyranny and to oppose the new, illegal authority which was usurped over their consciences." Mrs. Williamson's affidavit was read, the substance of which has been already given, with the exception that, after her marriage, Wesley took every opportunity to force upon her his

[1] Wesley's unpublished journal.
[2] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 327.

private discourse, and terrified her by telling her that her soul would be in danger, if she did not spend her time, and converse with him, in the same manner, as she did before her marriage.[1] 1737 Age 34

Causton then delivered to the grand jury a paper, entitled "A List of Grievances," pretending to show that the Rev. John Wesley "deviates from the principles and regulations of the Established Church in many particulars inconsistent with the happiness and prosperity of this colony," as:—

"1. By inverting the order and method of the liturgy.

"2. By altering such passages as he thinks proper in the version of the psalms, publicly authorised to be sung in the church.

"3. By introducing into the church, and service at the altar, compositions of psalms and hymns not inspected or authorised by any proper judicature.

"4. By introducing novelties, such as dipping infants, etc., in the sacrament of baptism, and refusing to baptize the children of such as will not submit to his innovations.

"5. By restricting the benefits of the Lord's supper to a small number of persons, and refusing it to all others who will not conform to a grievous set of penances, confessions, mortifications, and constant attendance at early and late hours of prayer, very inconsistent with the labours and employment of this colony.

"6. By administering the sacrament of the Lord's supper to boys ignorant and unqualified; and that notwithstanding of their parents and nearest friends remonstrating against it, and accusing them of disobedience and other crimes.

"7. By refusing to administer the holy sacrament to well disposed and well living persons, unless they should submit to confessions and penances for crimes, which they utterly refuse, and whereof no evidence is offered.

"8. By venting sundry uncharitable expressions of all who differ from him; and not pronouncing the benediction in church, until all the hearers, except his own communicants, are withdrawn.

"9. By teaching wives and servants that they ought absolutely to follow the course of mortifications, fastings, and diets, and two sets of prayers prescribed by him; without any regard to the interests of their private families, or the commands of their respective husbands and masters.

"10. By refusing the Office of the Dead to such as did not communicate with him, or by leaving out such parts of the service as he thought proper.

"11. By searching into and meddling with the affairs of private families, by means of servants and spies employed by him for the purpose, whereby the peace both of public and private life is much endangered.

[1] Wesley's unpublished journal.

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"12. By calling himself 'ordinary,' and thereby claiming a jurisdiction which is not due to him, and whereby we should be precluded from access to redress by any superior jurisdiction."[1]

How did the grand jury deal with these charges?

First of all, Mrs. Williamson was called, but acknowledged, in the course of her examination, that she had no objection to Wesley's behaviour previous to her marriage. After her, Mr. and Mrs. Causton were examined; the former confessing that, if Wesley had asked his consent to marry his niece, he would not have refused it.[2] Ten other witnesses were put into the box, and several of Wesley's letters to Mrs. Williamson were read.[3]

Some days were spent in sifting the business; and then, on September 1, a majority of the jurymen agreed to the following indictments:—

1. That, after the 12th of March last, the said John Wesley did several times privately force his conversation to Sophia Christiana Williamson, contrary to the express desire and command of her husband; and did likewise write and privately convey papers to her, thereby occasioning much uneasiness between her and her husband.

2. That, on the 7th of August last, he refused the sacrament of the Lord's supper to Sophia Christiana Williamson, without any apparent reason, much to the disquiet of her mind, and to the great disgrace and hurt of her character.

3. That he hath not, since his arrival in Savannah, emitted any public declaration of his adherence to the principles and regulations of the Church of England.

4. That, for many months past, he has divided on the Lord's day the order of morning prayer, appointed to be used in the Church of England, by only reading the said morning prayer and the litany at five or six o'clock, and wholly omitting the same between the hours of nine and eleven o'clock, the customary time of public morning prayer.

5. That, about the month of April, 1736, he refused to baptize, otherwise than by dipping, the child of Henry Parker, unless the said Henry Parker and his wife would certify that

[1] Wesley's unpublished journal. [2] Ibid.
[2] "The Progress of Methodism in Bristol." 1743.

the child was weak and not able to bear dipping; and added to his refusal, that, unless the said parents would consent to have it dipped, it might die a heathen. 1737 Age 34

6. That, notwithstanding he administered the sacrament of the Lord's supper to William Gough, about the month of March, 1736, he did, within a month after, refuse the sacrament to the said William Gough, saying that he had heard that William Gough was a Dissenter.

7. That in June, 1736, he refused reading the Office of the Dead over the body of Nathaniel Polhill, only because Nathaniel Polhill was not of his opinion; by means of which refusal the said Nathaniel Polhill was interred without the appointed Office for the Burial of the Dead.

8. That, on or about the 10th of August, 1737, he, in the presence of Thomas Causton, presumptuously called himself "Ordinary of Savannah," assuming thereby an authority which did not belong to him.

9. That in Whitsun-week last he refused William Aglionby to stand godfather to the child of Henry Marley, giving no other reason than that the said William Aglionby had not been at the communion table with him.

10. That, about the month of July last, he baptized the child of Thomas Jones, having only one godfather and godmother, notwithstanding that Jacob Matthews did offer to stand godfather.[1]

Such were the findings of the majority of the grand jury. The minority of twelve, including three constables and six tithingmen, drew up and signed a document, and transmitted it "to the honourable the trustees for Georgia," to the following effect:—

1. That they were thoroughly persuaded that the charges against Mr. Wesley were an artifice of Mr. Causton's, designed rather to blacken the character of Mr. Wesley than to free the colony from religious tyranny, as he had alleged.

2. That it did not appear that Mr. Wesley had either spoken in private or written to Mrs. Williamson since the day of her marriage, except one letter, which he wrote on the 5th of July, at the request of her uncle, as a pastor, to exhort and reprove her.

[1] Wesley's unpublished journal.

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3. That, though he did refuse the sacrament to Mrs. Williamson on the 7th of August last, he did not assume to himself any authority contrary to law, for every person intending to communicate was bound to signify his name to the curate, at least some time the day before; which Mrs. Williamson did not do; although Mr. Wesley had often, in full congregation, declared he did insist on a compliance with that rubric, and had before repelled divers persons for non-compliance therewith.

4. That, though he had not in Savannah emitted any public declaration of his adherence to the principles and regulations of the Church of England, he had done this, in a stronger manner than by a formal declaration, by explaining and defending the three creeds, the thirty-nine articles, the whole Book of Common Prayer, and the homilies; besides a formal declaration is not required, but from those who have received institution and induction.

5. That though he had divided, on the Lord's day, the order of morning prayer, this was not contrary to any law in being.

6. That his refusal to baptize Henry Parker's child, otherwise than by dipping, was justified by the rubric.

7. That, though he had refused the sacrament to William Gough, the said William Gough (one of the twelve jurors who signed the document sent to the trustees) publicly declared that the refusal was no grievance to him, because Mr. Wesley had given him reasons with which he was satisfied.

8. That, in reference to the alleged refusal to read the burial service over the body of Nathaniel Polhill, they had good reason to believe that Mr. Wesley was at Frederica, or on his return thence, when Polhill was interred; besides Polhill was an anabaptist, and desired, in his lifetime, that he might not be buried with the office of the Church of England.

9. That they were in doubt about the indictment concerning Wesley calling himself "Ordinary of Savannah," not well knowing the meaning of the word.

10. That, though Mr. Wesley refused to allow William Aglionby to stand godfather to the child of Henry Marley, and Jacob Matthews to stand godfather to the child of Thomas Jones, he was sufficiently justified by the canons of the Church, because neither Aglionby nor Matthews had certified Mr. Wesley that they had ever received the holy communion.

Such were the findings of his foes and of his friends: the only difference, as to fact, between the majority of thirty-two and the minority of twelve, is that which relates to Mrs. Williamson and Nathaniel Polhill. The minority declare that it is not true that Mr. Wesley did *several times* privately force his conversation to Sophia Williamson after her marriage; and that they have good reason to believe that it is not true that he refused to read the burial service over Nathaniel Polhill, because, at the time of the burial, he was absent from Savannah. All the other alleged facts are admitted, but are also justified. How did Wesley meet the indictments? 1737 Age 34

On September 2, the day after they were presented and were read to the people, he appeared in court, and spoke to this effect:—"As to nine of the ten indictments against me, I know this court can take no cognisance of them, they being matters of an ecclesiastical nature. But that concerning my speaking and writing to Mrs. Williamson is of a secular nature; and this, therefore, I desire may be tried here where the facts complained of were committed."[1]

In this Wesley was unquestionably right. His conduct as a priest of the Church of England might be, as it doubtless was, arrogant, foolish, offensive, intolerant; but the petty magisterial court at Savannah had no more right to try him for his high church practices than an Old Bailey judge and jury have to try the half-fledged papistical rectors, curates, and incumbents, who are playing such fantastic tricks in the Protestant churches of old England at the present day. They had a right to try him on the matter mentioned by himself, inasmuch as it was alleged that Mrs. Williamson had been injured in her character, and, on that account, her husband demanded damages to the extent of £1000.

Wesley was prepared to answer this indictment, and moved for an immediate hearing; but the court evaded his request, and postponed the hearing to its next sitting. From September 1, when the indictments were first presented, to the end of November, when Wesley made known his intention to return to England, he seems to have attended not fewer than seven different sittings of the court, asking to be tried on the

[1] Wesley's unpublished journal.

1737 Age 34 charge affecting the character of Mrs. Williamson; but all to no purpose. The fact is, Mr. and Mrs. Williamson, after having stabbed him, were about to set sail to England,[1] and their contemplated absence was made a pretext for not proceeding with the trial. There can be little doubt that the whole affair was, as the twelve jurors believed, a device of Thomas Causton, to gratify his spite, and, by annoyances, to drive Wesley from the colony.

Six days after the majority of the grand jury presented their indictments, Mr. Dixon, chaplain to a company of soldiers at Frederica, called on Wesley, and informed him that the magistrates of Savannah had given him authority to perform ecclesiastical offices in the town; and that he should begin to do so the day following, by reading prayers, preaching, and administering the Lord's supper. Accordingly, on September 8, the bell was rung, and Mr. Dixon read prayers and preached, in Wesley's church, to Mr. Causton, Mr. and Mrs. Williamson, and about half-a-score other persons. He announced that he had intended to administer the holy communion, but some of his communicants were indisposed. He would, however, read prayers and preach every Thursday, and would administer baptism to as many children as might be brought for that purpose. This was *ipso facto* a setting aside of Wesley; or, at all events, it was an arbitrary appointment of another clergyman to fill his place.

On the Sunday following, September 11, Wesley preached from, "It must needs be that offences come;" and then proceeded to read a paper which he had read before, on the day he began his ministry at Savannah, and in which he had apprised his congregation:—1. That he must admonish every one of them, not only in public, but from house to house. 2. That he could admit none to the holy communion without previous notice. 3. That he should divide the morning service in compliance with the first design of the Church. 4. That he should obey the rubric by dipping in baptism all children who were well able to endure it. 5. That he should admit none who were not communicants to be sureties in baptism. 6. That though, in general, he had all the authority which was

[1] Wesley's unpublished journal.

entrusted to any one within the province, yet he was only a servant of the Church of England,—not a judge, and therefore obliged to keep the regulations of that Church in all things.[1] 1737 Age 34

On succeeding Sundays, he read to the congregations the homilies, and then began reading Dr. Rogers's eight sermons, as an antidote against the poison of infidelity. Up to the present, he had no intention of leaving the colony. Indeed, as lately as the 7th of June last, he had written to his sister Keziah, and had made her an offer to come and live with him at Savannah ;[2] but, as soon as it was known that Williamson and his wife were about to start for England, Delamotte urged that Wesley ought to go as well, in order to prevent, or remove, the misrepresentations which they were likely to make. This was on September 9;[3] and, a month later, Wesley took counsel with his friends on the same subject. They were unanimously of opinion "that he ought to go, but not yet"; and accordingly he abandoned his purpose for the present.

Meanwhile, he commenced three kinds of services which he had not before attempted. He offered to read prayers, and to expound the Scriptures, in French, every Saturday afternoon, to the French families settled at Highgate, five miles from Savannah, which offer was thankfully accepted. The French at Savannah heard of this, and requested he would do the same for them, with which request he willingly complied. He also began to read prayers and expound in German, once a week, to the German villagers of Hampstead.

His Sunday labour, during the few weeks that he yet remained in Savannah, was as follows: 1. English prayers from five o'clock to half-past six. 2. Italian prayers at nine. 3. A sermon and the holy communion, for the English, from half-past ten to about half-past twelve. 4. The service for the French at one, including prayers, psalms, and Scripture exposition. 5. The catechizing of the children at two. 6. The third English service at three. 7. After this a meeting in his own house for reading, prayer, and praise. 8. At six, the Moravian service began, which he was glad to attend, not to teach, but learn.

Thus things proceeded until November 22, when Causton

[1] Wesley's unpublished journal. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.

1737 Age 34 sent for Wesley and showed him an affidavit, sworn on September 15, to the effect that he had called Causton a liar and a villain; but, with characteristic duplicity, said he had not sent *this* affidavit to the trustees,—a statement, which, in fact, was both true and false, for although he had not sent *this* affidavit he had sent a *copy* of it. Causton bitterly added, that the last court held in Savannah had reprimanded him as "an enemy to and a hinderer of the public peace." "Both," says an eye-witness, "displayed warmth of temper; but Causton was most vehement. They parted with mutual civilities."[1]

This caused Wesley to again consult his friends about the propriety of his leaving the colony. He saw that at present there was no possibility of instructing the Indians; neither had he as yet found or heard of any Indians who had the least desire of being instructed. Thus the great reason of his leaving England was not realised. Then, as to Savannah, he had never engaged himself, either by word or letter, to stay there a day longer than he should judge convenient. And, further, he now saw a probability of doing more service to the unhappy colonists by going to England, than he could do by remaining in Georgia; for there he could, without fear or favour, report to the trustees the state in which the colony was placed. All his friends agreed with him; and accordingly, next morning, he called on Causton, and told him he "designed to set out for England immediately, and placarded an advertisement in the great square" of the unbuilt town to the same effect.

Savannah was in great excitement. Causton had his partisans, and so had Wesley his. Scandal was plentiful. Wesley's congregations dwindled, and were now extremely thin. Mr. Stephens, the secretary of the trustees at Savannah, relates[2] that, in November, he heard Wesley preach on "Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar or not?" from which he discoursed largely on the duties of magistrates, and on the obedience which was due to them; setting forth how far it was consistent with Christian liberty for people to insist upon their rights, when they found themselves oppressed by inferior magistrates exercising a discretionary authority which ex-

[1] "A Journal of the Proceedings in Georgia. By W. Stephens, Esq." 8vo: 2 vols. [2] Ibid.

ceeded their commission. Stephens adds, that the congregation was very poor, and that he found that the magistrates and many of the principal inhabitants had of late wholly absented themselves from church. 1737 Age 34

On November 20, Wesley preached from the text, "Jesus wept." Stephens writes: "He showed himself a good casuist; but his metaphysical discourse would have been better adapted to a learned audience than such a poor thin congregation as his, who stood in need of plain doctrine."

On November 27, he preached from Acts xx. 26, 27. Stephens, who was present, says: "He enforced the practice of all Christian duties most pathetically, which he was well qualified to do. Some people imagined, from the choice of the text, that he meant it as a sort of farewell sermon; but it did not appear so from any particular expressions employed."

No sooner was it known that Wesley meant to embark for England, than Williamson issued an advertisement that he had brought an action against him for £1000 damages; and that if any one assisted his escape from the colony, he would prosecute such accomplice with the utmost rigour of the law.[1] The magistrates also sent for Wesley, and told him he must not leave the province till he had answered the indictments against him. Wesley replied that he had already attended seven sessions of the court to answer them, and had not been permitted. They then requested him to sign a kind of bond, engaging him, under a penalty of £50, to appear at their court when he should be required; and added that Mr. Williamson also demanded that he should give bail to answer his action. Wesley replied that he would give neither any bond, nor any bail at all; and so he left them. In the afternoon of the same day they published an order requiring all the officers and sentinels to prevent his leaving the province, and forbidding any person to assist him in doing so.

He was now a prisoner at large, and the same evening, after public prayers, he set out in a boat for Purrysburg, distant about twenty miles, and thus left Savannah and Georgia for ever.[2]

[1] "Journal of Proceedings in Georgia." 8vo: 2 vols.

[2] It is a remarkable fact that, though Savannah is the chief city in the state of Georgia, Methodism hardly has an existence in it. Wesley left it in 1737; and three years after, Whitefield founded his Savannah

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Arriving at Purrysburg early in the morning of December 3, Wesley and the four men who had assisted in his escape, and had rowed him to Purrysburg, set out on foot to Port Royal. Tramping their way through trackless forests, they came to a large swamp, around which they wandered for three weary hours. Then they had to force their way through an almost impassable thicket. They had now been trudging from an hour before sunrise in the morning till nearly sunset at night, and had not tasted food, except a gingerbread cake, which Wesley happened to have in his pocket. They were faint and weary, and no wonder. Thrusting a stick into the ground, and finding its end moist, two of them set to work digging with their hands, and, at about three feet depth, obtained water. They thanked God, drank, and were refreshed. The month was December, and the night cold; but there was no complaining; and, having commended themselves to God, they lay down on the ground, close together, and Wesley, at least, slept till near six in the morning.

The next day was Sunday; but the bewildered fugitives started again, and after three more days of weary wandering reached Port Royal. Delamotte joined them on Thursday, December 8, when, taking a boat, they all set sail for Charlestown. This was no comfortable steamer, but a small watercraft, without covering, and impelled by oars. Four days were spent in making the passage, the winds were contrary, and their provisions short; but, cold and hungry, they arrived in safety on Tuesday, December 13.[1]

Orphan House, which has long since crumbled into ruins. Nothing more was done until 1790, when Hope Hull was sent to Savannah and preached a few times in a chairmaker's shop, but met with more mob violence than spiritual success. Ten years later, John Garvin tried to collect a society; but the attempt was a failure. The South Carolina Conference, held in 1806, appointed Samuel Dunwody, and he succeeded in forming the first Methodist society in Savannah since the breaking up of that formed by Wesley seventy years previously. Dunwody's society consisted of twelve members, five of them white and seven coloured. After hard toiling a chapel was erected in Savannah in 1812, and was opened by Bishop Asbury; but, to the present day, the opposition to Methodism is most decided, and the Methodist society and congregation are extremely poor and meagre. (See Dr. Dixon's "Methodism in America," p. 282.)

[1] It is right to add that Mr. Stephens, the trustees' secretary, who, upon the whole, evinces a friendly spirit towards Wesley, gives a somewhat scurvy character of Wesley's companions. One of them, Coates, a

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Wesley and Delamotte, with the exception of a few brief days, had not been parted for the last six-and-twenty months: but on December 22 the former set sail for England; the latter, for a season, was left behind. One of Wesley's fellow passengers was a young gentleman, who had been one of his parishioners at Savannah; and another was Eleanor Hayes, who became one of the first Methodists in London, and of whom an interesting notice may be found in the *Methodist Magazine* for 1867. It was impossible for Wesley to live an idle life. During the voyage, he began instructing two negro lads and the cabin-boy in the principles of the Christian religion. On Sundays, at least, he had morning and evening prayers. He finished his abridgment of De Renty's Life; and he read and explained to a poor Frenchman a chapter in the New Testament every morning. When in mid-ocean they encountered a terrific storm, which gave Wesley an opportunity of speaking faithfully to all on board about their eternal interests. On February 1 they landed at Deal, the day after George Whitefield had set sail for the very settlement which Wesley had been obliged to leave.

During the passage Wesley had ample time for self-examination, and wrote as follows:—

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constable, had been one of the principal fomenters of mischief, a busy fellow, going from house to house with idle stories to fill people's heads with jealousies, and distinguishing himself by a most inveterate opposition to all the rules of government. He was greatly in debt, and had never improved one foot of land since his arrival in the province. Gough, a tithingman, was an idle fellow, pert and impudent in his behaviour, always kicking against the civil power, and making it his business to inflame sedition. He also was in debt; and left behind him a wife and child, who scarce grieved at his departure, for he used to beat them more than feed them. Campbell, a barber, was an insignificant loose fellow, fit for any leader that would make a tool of him, and whose only motive for going off was to escape his creditors.

There can be little doubt that this is true; but it by no means follows that these vagabonds were Wesley's *friends*. They seem to have been *fugitives* as well as he. Misfortune makes a man acquainted with strange bedfellows; still, leaving in such company was an ugly fact, and was used to Wesley's disadvantage. Mr. Stephens writes: "As I was always ready and willing, in conversation or otherwise, to make allowance for Mr. Wesley's failings in policy, and was careful not to run hastily into a belief of all I heard against him, I was now asked, in a sneering way, what my sentiments were of him? '*Noscitur ex sociis*' was the common byword; and all I had to say was that he must stand or fall by himself, when his cause came before the trustees."

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"By the most infallible of proofs, inward feeling, I am convinced—

"1. Of unbelief; having no such faith in Christ as will prevent my heart being troubled.

"2. Of pride, throughout my life past; inasmuch as I thought I had what I find I have not.

"3. Of gross irrecollection; inasmuch as in a storm I cry to God every moment, in a calm not.

"4. Of levity and luxuriancy of spirit; appearing by my speaking words not tending to edify, but most by my manner of speaking of my enemies."

He adds:—

"I went to America to convert the Indians; but oh, who shall convert me? I have a fair summer religion. I can talk well; but let death look me in the face, and my spirit is troubled. I think, verily, if the gospel be true, I am safe: for I not only have given, and do give, all my goods to feed the poor; and not only give my body to be burned, drowned, or whatever God shall appoint for me; but I follow after charity, if haply I may attain it. I now believe the gospel is true. I show my faith by my works,—by staking my all upon it. I would do so again and again, a thousand times, if the choice were still to make. Whoever sees me sees I would be a Christian. But in a storm, I think, 'What if the gospel be not true? Then thou art of all men most foolish. For what hast thou given thy goods, thy ease, thy friends, thy reputation, thy country, thy life? For what art thou wandering over the face of the earth—a dream! a cunningly devised fable?' Oh, who will deliver me from this fear of death? A wise man advised me some time since, 'Be still and go on.' Perhaps this is best, to look upon it as my cross."

After landing in England, he penned another remarkable paper, which has often been cited without a quotation of the notes he appended in after years.[1] He asserts that when he went to America, to convert the Indians, he was not himself converted; but in the appended note he adds, "I am not sure of this." Neither are we. By his conscientious severity in comparing himself with the standard of a perfect Christian, as contained in the New Testament, and by his imperfect and mystified views of the scriptural plan of salvation, he might deprive himself of the filial confidence and joy belonging to a child of God; but we dare not affirm that he was a child of wrath because he was without the joy. On the same principle, thousands of us would be children one day, but not the next. Wesley's assertion was too strong; in after life

[1] See Wesley's Works, vol. i., p. 76; and Errata to vol. xxvi. of his collected works, published in 1774.

he felt it so; and those who quote it ought, in all fairness, to add what he himself appended. 1737 Age 34

In another part of the same document he says of himself: "Alienated as I am from the life of God, I am a child of wrath, an heir of hell." But the note he attached to this, in subsequent years, is, "I believe not"; and if not a child of wrath, then in his opinion, and after mature reflection, he had a right to think himself a child of grace and an heir of heaven.

Another of his notes is: "I had even then the faith of a servant, though not that of a son;" and that the reader may know what interpretation to put upon such words, we give the following extract from one of Wesley's own sermons:—

"But what is the faith which is properly saving? It is such a Divine conviction of God, and the things of God, as, even in its infant state, enables every one that possesses it to fear God and work righteousness. And whosoever, in every nation, believes thus far, is accepted of Him. He actually is, at that very moment, in a state of acceptance. But he is at present only a *servant* of God, not properly a *son*. Meanwhile let it be well observed that the wrath of God no longer abideth on him. Nearly fifty years ago, when the preachers, commonly called Methodists, began to preach that grand scriptural doctrine, salvation by faith, they were not sufficiently apprised of the difference between a servant and a child of God. In consequence of this, they were apt to make sad the hearts of those whom God had not made sad. For they frequently asked those who feared God, 'Do you know that your sins are forgiven?' And upon their answering 'No,' immediately replied, 'Then you are a child of the devil.' No; that does not follow. It might have been said (and it is all that can be said with propriety), 'Hitherto you are only a *servant*, you are not a *child* of God. You have already great reason to praise God that He has called you to His honourable service. Fear not, continue crying unto Him, and you shall see greater things than these!' And, indeed, unless the servants of God halt by the way, they will receive the adoption of sons. They will receive the *faith* of the children of God, by His *revealing* His only begotten Son in their hearts. Thus, the faith of a child is, properly and directly, a Divine conviction, whereby every child of God is enabled to testify, 'The life that I now live I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.' And whosoever hath this, the Spirit of God witnesseth with his spirit, that he is a child of God. This then it is, that properly constitutes the difference between a servant of God and a child of God."[1]

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. vii., p. 190.

1737 Age 34 Let those who have been accustomed to cite Wesley's hasty and incautious condemnation of himself, on his return from Georgia, read it again in the light of his own appended notes, and in the light of this extract from a sermon written by himself nearly fifty years afterwards; and they will then have a more correct idea of Wesley's religious state at Oxford and in America, and will also be better fitted to understand what is meant by what is called his conversion on the 24th of May, 1738. This matter, however, must be resumed in its proper place.

Wesley, in Georgia, was accepted of God through Christ; but, to cite his own words at the conclusion of his own condemnatory document, he wanted "a sure trust and confidence in God, that, through the merits of Christ, his sins were forgiven." "I want," says he, "that faith which none can have without knowing that he hath it."

Wesley, according to his own explanation, had long been in a *saved* state (though he knew it not); but he was far from being perfect, either in spirit or behaviour. No man could be more sincere or earnest; but it is hoped that few ministers of equal learning, wisdom, and sanctity make greater blunders than were made by him at Savannah. There can be little doubt that he had ecclesiastical authority for most, if not all, his priestly practices; and so have the half papistical priests and ritualists of the present day. But as England now is right in resisting the introduction of rites and ceremonies, fasts and feasts, confessions and penances, absolutions and interdicts, savouring more of the man of sin than of the word of God,—so Savannah then was right in resisting similar innovations attempted to be introduced by the extremely high church priest, fresh from the society of the Oxford Methodists. If we are right in denouncing *ritualism* now, Savannah was right in denouncing *ritualism* then. If the thing is offensive and obnoxious here, it was equally offensive and obnoxious there; and if no other end had been answered by Wesley's mission to America than knocking out of him his high church nonsense, the good effected would have been an ample compensation for two dangerous voyages of six thousand miles, and for all the discomforts of living two-and-twenty months, in a log-built hut, among almost homeless

emigrants, who had taken with them to the swamps and woods of Georgia more covetousness than courtesy, more rudeness than rank, more quarrelsomeness than quietude, and more conceit than common sense. 1737 Age 34

Wesley has been blamed for repelling Mrs. Williamson from the communion; and if he had nothing more to allege against her than the offence that, since her marriage, she had come to sacrament once a month only, instead of once a week, he deserves to be blamed. It was a rash proceeding, utterly unwarranted; and both she and her husband did right in resisting it. So far we agree with Wesley's censors; but we cannot agree with them in saying that the great, if not only, reason of his repelling her was revenge arising out of her refusal to marry him. There is not a particle of evidence in proof of that. Five months had elapsed since her marriage; and, again and again, during that interval, he had administered to her the holy communion. The repulse was, on his part, a strictly conscientious, not a revengeful act; but though conscientious, it was, to say the least, mistaken, and deserves censure instead of praise. Mr. Moore says that, about three months after Mrs. Williamson's marriage, Wesley saw things in her conduct which induced him to bless God for his deliverance in not marrying her, and that these things were noted in his private journal never printed. We have not the slightest wish to defend the lady where she deserves censure: but fairness compels us to say that we have seen the private journal; but neither in it, nor elsewhere, have we met with anything charged against her more serious than what has been already mentioned in the present far too lengthy chapter. Dissimulation is the strongest word Wesley has used concerning her; and this is used in reference to something which happened three months after she was married, and of which no explanation is given.[1] Miss Hopkey, like Wesley himself, was not so good as she might have been; but that is not a sufficient reason why Wesley's biographers should insinuate, if not assert, that she was worse than she really was.

Wesley's mission to America seemed a failure! But was it so? When Whitefield arrived, he wrote: "The good

[1] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 320.

1737 Age 34 Mr. John Wesley has done in America is inexpressible. His name is very precious among the people; and he has laid a foundation that I hope neither men nor devils will ever be able to shake. Oh that I may follow him as he has followed Christ."[1]

Wesley himself observes:—

"Many reasons I have to bless God for my having been carried to America, contrary to all my preceding resolutions. Hereby, I trust, He hath in some measure '*humbled me and proved me, and shown me what was in my heart.*' Hereby, I have been taught to '*beware of men.*' Hereby, God has given me to know many of His servants, particularly those of the church of Herrnhuth. Hereby, my passage is open to the writings of holy men, in the German, Spanish, and Italian tongues. All in Georgia have heard the word of God, and some have believed and begun to run well. A few steps have been taken towards publishing the glad tidings both to the African and American heathens. Many children have learned how they ought to serve God, and to be useful to their neighbour. And those whom it most concerns have an opportunity of knowing the state of their infant colony, and laying a firmer foundation of peace and happiness to many generations."[2]

These are no mean results to be realised in about two years,—self-knowledge, caution, acquaintance with the church that was to help him to clearer views of the plan of salvation, the acquisition of three European languages, the unprecedented fact of preaching Christ to *all* the widely scattered inhabitants of an English colony, steps taken to evangelise negroes and Indians, many children religiously educated, and the way prepared for promoting the prosperity of Georgia to the end of time!

[1] Whitefield's Journal.
[2] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 347.

CHAPTER V.

WESLEY IN TRANSITION. 1738.

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WHITEFIELD left England the day before Wesley reached it. He landed in Georgia on the 7th of May, 1738, and remained sixteen weeks; and then set out again for his own country, where he arrived on November 30: a flying visit, but not a fruitless one. Having been ordained by Bishop Benson in June, 1736, he began his unparalleled preaching career with a sermon in the church of St. Mary de Crypt, Gloucester, where he had been baptized, and where he first received the sacrament of the Lord's supper. Some of his congregation mocked, but most were powerfully impressed. The bishop was informed that the sermon had driven fifteen persons mad; the worthy prelate hoped the madness would be abiding. Whitefield was a stripling of twenty-one; but wherever he went crowds flocked to hear him. At Bristol, the whole city seemed alarmed; Quakers, Baptists, Presbyterians, and sectarians of all kinds, ran after him; and churches were as full on week days as they had used to be on Sundays. Wesley wrote to his Oxford friends, asking help for Georgia. Whitefield was preaching as often as four times a day, and had become so famous that Raikes, of Gloucester, and others, thought it an enrichment of their newspapers to insert accounts of his doings; but his friend Wesley needed help, and that was quite enough to make him treat as trifles the praises of the multitudes who ran after him. Just at the time when Wesley was compelled to leave Georgia, Whitefield repaired to London to embark for it. During his brief detention, in less than three months, he preached in London about a hundred sermons, and collected above a thousand pounds for charity schools and for the poor. When he set sail, he read prayers and preached twice every day; and such was his influence on board, that the very soldiers stood out before him to say their catechism like little children.

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The day after his arrival at Savannah, Causton and the magistrates sent word that they would wait upon him; but he chose rather to wait upon them, and was treated with as much deference as Wesley had been treated with disrespect. He began to visit from house to house, catechized, read prayers morning and evening, and expounded the two second lessons every day. He found Tomo-Chichi, the Indian chief, on a blanket, thin and meagre, and evidently dying. At Hampstead and Highgate he followed Wesley's example, and read prayers once a week, though the population of the former village consisted of only three men, one woman, and seven children. He also visited Thunderbolt, a village of three families consisting of sixteen persons, and preached to them. He likewise opened a girls' school at Savannah. He paid a few days' visit to Frederica, where there was now a population of about one hundred and twenty; and read prayers and preached, under a large tree, to more than could have been expected. He also visited the Saltzburghers at Ebenezer, and found two such pious ministers as he had not often seen.

Four months having been thus spent, he set out for England, the Savannah people bidding adieu to him with tearful eyes, and begging that he would soon return. He landed in Ireland in November, where mayors and bishops vied with each other in inviting him to their mansions and palaces, and where he also took the opportunity of visiting the cabins of Irish peasants, in one of which, twenty feet long and twelve broad, there were a man, his wife and three children, two pigs feeding, two dogs, and several geese, a great fire, and the master of the family threshing corn.

On reaching London, he found that those who had been awakened by his preaching a year ago had "grown strong men in Christ, by the ministrations of his dear friends and fellow labourers, John and Charles Wesley." The old doctrine of justification by faith only had been much revived; societies had been instituted at Fetter Lane and other places; and Whitefield ended the eventful year of 1738 by preaching and expounding, during the last week of it, not fewer than seven-and-twenty times.[1]

[1] Whitefield's journal and letters.

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Let us now turn to Wesley. He landed at Deal early in the morning of February 1; and at once resumed his work in England, by reading prayers and preaching at the inn. After breakfast, he set out for London, and, reaching Faversham at night, he again read prayers and expounded the second lesson to a few who were called Christians, but who were more savage in their behaviour than the wildest Indians he had ever met. His next halting place was Blendon, where the family of his friend Charles Delamotte gave him a hearty welcome. On the evening of February 3, he arrived in London; and, without delay, visited Oglethorpe, and waited upon the Georgian trustees; gave to them a written account why he had left the colony; and returned to them the instrument whereby they had appointed him minister of Savannah.

Wesley was too earnest to take a holiday. Time with him was too important for any part of it to be spent in idleness. Reaching London on Friday, he resumed preaching on Sunday; and, for the next fifty-three years, never ceased, and never lagged, in this important work, except when serious sickness occasionally laid upon him a brief embargo.

And, certainly, if England ever needed earnest, enthusiastic labourers, it was now. During this very year of 1738, not fewer than fifty-two criminals were hanged at Tyburn; and within the last two years about 12,000 persons had been convicted, within the Bills of Mortality, of smuggling gin, or of selling it without the £50 per annum licence. Sunday traffic had become such a nuisance in London and its suburbs, that even the court of aldermen interfered, and commanded the marshals, and all constables, beadles, and other public officers, to use their best endeavours to suppress it. They were also to apprehend all shoeblacks cleaning shoes in the public streets; and to take notice of all vintners, ale and coffee house keepers, barbers, and others, who exercised their ordinary trades on Sundays. A committee of the House of Lords "to examine into the causes of the present notorious immorality and profaneness," stated, in their report, that they had sufficient grounds to believe that a number of loose and disorderly persons had of late formed themselves into a club, under the name of *Blasters*, and were using means to induce the youth of the kingdom to join them. The members of this impious

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club professed themselves to be votaries of the devil, offered prayers to him, and drank his health. They also had been heard to utter "the most daring and execrable blasphemies against the sacred name and majesty of God; and to use such obscene, blasphemous, and before unheard of expressions as the Lords' committee think they cannot even mention, and therefore they pass them over in silence." The same committee further reported, that "of late years there had appeared a greater neglect of religion and of all things sacred—a greater neglect of Divine worship, both public and private, and of the due observance of the sabbath, than had ever before been known in England. There was a want of reverence to the laws and to magistrates, and of a due subordination in the several ranks and degrees of the community. There was an abuse of liberty, a great neglect in education, and a want of care in training children, and in keeping servants in good order; while idleness, luxury, gambling, and an excessive use of spirituous and intoxicating liquors had grown into an alarming magnitude." The report concludes by recommending that the bishops be desired, at their visitations, to particularly charge the clergy to exhort the people to a more frequent and constant attendance at Divine services; and that visitors of the universities and of schools require the fellows and masters carefully to instruct the youth committed to their care, in the principles of religion and morality; to which recommendation the House of Lords agreed.

One month, in 1738, was spent by Wesley in his homeward voyage from America. Three others were spent in Germany. During the remaining eight he preached in various parts of England, at least, eighty times. One of his sermons was delivered in the cabin of a ship, two were preached in workhouses, eleven in Oxford castle, one in Oxford Bocardo, one in Lincoln College chapel, one in Manchester, one at Windsor, one at Stanton-Harcourt, two in Newgate prison, and the remainder principally in twenty-six different churches in the metropolis. His sermon at St. John the Evangelist's "offended many of the best in the parish." His first discourse at St. Lawrence's was "an open defiance of that mystery of iniquity which the world calls 'prudence,'" and gave great offence. A sermon at Oxford castle was chiefly

addressed to a man condemned to die, and who, on the same day, found the forgiveness of his sins, and shortly after went to the gallows "enjoying perfect peace." At one of his sermons in Newgate prison, nine persons were present who had recently received sentence of death—two for murdering their wives, one for filing guineas, two for burglary, and four for robberies. These wretched creatures, and two others previously condemned, were all executed at Tyburn, on November 8;[1] and, at their earnest desire, Wesley and his brother, on the day of execution, went to Newgate "to do the last good office" to them. Charles preached; the malefactors wept; and some of them, at least, were filled with "the peace of God which passeth all understanding." Wesley writes: "It was the most glorious instance I ever saw of faith triumphing over sin and death." 1738 Age 35

The great event in Wesley's history, during the year 1738, was his conversion. Something has been said already on this momentous subject; but other facts and explanations must now be given. Let us try to answer the questions following:—

1. What was the religious state, and what were the religious views, of Wesley previous to his conversion? 2. What were the doctrines he was taught by Peter Bohler? 3. When was he converted? and how?

1. Wesley's religious state and views previous to his conversion.

He was *almost a Christian.*[2] He most rigorously abstained from everything which the gospel of Christ prohibits, and cheerfully practised everything which it enjoins. He avoided every form of profanity, and every word or look that, directly or indirectly, tended to uncleanness. He equally avoided detraction, backbiting, talebearing, evil speaking, and idle words. He was no railer, brawler, or scoffer at the faults or infirmities of others, but continually endeavoured to live peaceably with all men. He laboured and suffered for the benefit of many. He reproved the wicked, instructed the ignorant, confirmed the wavering, quickened the good, and comforted the afflicted. He used all the means of grace, and at all opportunities: he attended public service every day;

[1] *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1738.
[2] Wesley's Works, vol. v., p. 18.

1738 Age 35 he communicated every week; he constantly used family prayer; he had set times daily for private devotions. All this was done from a sincere and hearty desire to serve God and to do His will. In all his conversation and in all his actions—in all he did and in all he left undone, his only motive was a design to please and honour God. He declares that he went thus far for many years, and yet that all this time he was only *almost a Christian.*[1]

He held no principles but what he believed to be revealed in the word of God; and, in the interpretation of that word he always judged the most literal sense to be the best, unless when the literal sense of one scripture contradicted some other. He firmly believed in a change wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, and called a person thus changed "regenerated, born again, and a new creature." In all other cases, he endeavoured to express spiritual things in spiritual words, though he was not ignorant that such words and their hidden meaning were treated by the unconverted as jargon and cant.[2]

He had many remarkable answers to prayer, especially when he was in trouble; and he had many sensible comforts—short anticipations of the life of faith. He had a Divine conviction of God and of the things of God; and firmly believed in Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the world.[3] He was, at least, a *servant* of God, *and was accepted of Him*;[4] and yet all this while he was beating the air, and was seeking to establish his own righteousness, instead of submitting to the righteousness of Christ which is by faith. He delighted in the law of God, after the inner man; and yet he was carnal, sold under sin. Every day he was constrained to cry out, "What I do I allow not: for what I would I do not; but what I hate that I do. To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." He was fighting with sin continually, but not always conquering. Before, he had *willingly* served sin; now it was *unwillingly*; but still he served it. He fell, and rose, and fell again. Sometimes he was overcome, and in heaviness; sometimes he overcame, and

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. v., p. 18.
[2] See original letter, *Methodist Magazine*, 1846, p. 1089.
[3] Wesley's Works, vol. i., p. 22. [4] Ibid. vol. vii., p. 189.

was in joy. Once he had foretastes of the terrors of the law; but now he had foretastes of the comforts of the gospel. For above ten years there was in him this struggle between nature and grace; and yet he was still only striving with, not freed from, sin; neither had he the witness of the Spirit with his spirit that he was a child of God; nor indeed could he, for he "sought it not by faith, but, as it were, by the works of the law."[1] 1738 Age 35

Such is Wesley's description of himself; and this, when added to what has been previously said concerning his religious career at Oxford, will be a sufficient answer to the first of the three questions proposed.

2. The second is, what were the doctrines which Wesley was taught by Peter Bohler?

In the storm which Wesley encountered in his voyage from Georgia, he found himself in fear of death; and was convinced that the cause of it was unbelief; and that the gaining a true living faith was the "one thing needful" for him.

Peter Bohler told him that true faith in Christ was inseparably attended by—(1) dominion over sin; and (2) constant peace, arising from a sense of forgiveness. Wesley was amazed, and regarded this as a new gospel; for if this was so, it was clear that he was without true faith in Christ, because he was without its inseparable fruits. He was not willing to be convinced of this. He disputed with all his strength, and laboured to prove that there might be faith without the two fruits mentioned, and especially the second. Bohler referred him to the Bible and to experience. Wesley consulted the Bible, and when he had set aside the glosses of men he was bound to acknowledge that Bohler was correct. Still he hesitated to believe that any "experience" could be adduced in favour of Bohler's doctrine. The next day Bohler brought to him three persons, all of whom testified of their own personal experience that a true living faith in Christ is inseparable from a sense of pardon for all past, and freedom from all present, sins. They also added, with one mouth, that this faith is the gift, the free gift of God; and that He will surely give it to every one who earnestly and perseveringly prays for it.

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. i., p. 95.

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At subsequent interviews with Bohler, another doctrine was forced on Wesley, namely, that this saving faith in Christ is given in a moment, and that in an instant a man is turned from sin and misery to righteousness and joy in the Holy Ghost. Wesley kicked against this also; and Bohler again referred him to the Scriptures and to experience. Wesley searched the Scriptures; and, to his utter astonishment, he found there were scarcely any instances of other than *instantaneous* conversions. Still he had one retreat left, and told Bohler that, though "God wrought thus in the first ages of Christianity, times now were changed." To meet this objection, Bohler, the day after, turned to his *experience* test, and brought to Wesley several living witnesses, who testified that God had given them, in a moment, such a faith in Christ as translated them out of darkness into light, out of sin and fear into holiness and happiness. Wesley writes: "Here ended my disputing. I could now only cry out, 'Lord, help Thou my unbelief.' I was now thoroughly convinced; and, by the grace of God, I resolved to seek this faith unto the end—(1) By absolutely renouncing all dependence, in whole or in part, upon my own works of righteousness; on which I had really grounded my hope of salvation, though I knew it not, from my youth up. (2) By adding to the constant use of all the other means of grace continual prayer for this very thing—justifying, saving faith, a full reliance on the blood of Christ shed for me; a trust in Him as my Christ, as my sole justification, sanctification, and redemption."[1]

These then were the great doctrines which Peter Bohler brought to the hearing of John Wesley. They were new to him; but finding them to be scriptural, and also corroborated by living experience, he at once believed them. He went to the Delamotte family at Blendon, and there spake clearly and fully concerning them. Mr. Broughton and his brother Charles were present. The former objected, and the latter became so much offended, that in anger he left the room, telling his brother that his new-fangled doctrines were mischievous.[2] Wesley also wrote to his brother Samuel on the

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. i., pp. 86, 96.
[2] Wesley's Works, vol. i., p. 86; and C. Wesley's Journal, vol. i., p. 75.

same subject, on the 4th of April, declaring that he had seen, so far as it could be seen, very many persons changed, in a moment, from the spirit of horror, fear, and despair, to the spirit of hope, joy, and peace; and from sinful desires, till then reigning over them, to a pure desire of doing the will of God.[1] 1738 Age 35

We proceed to the third question,—

3. When and how was Wesley converted? His first interview with Bohler was on February 7, 1738; and, from that time till the 4th of May, when Bohler left London for Carolina, he embraced every opportunity of conversing with him. They went in company to Oxford, and to Mr. Gambold, at Stanton-Harcourt. The man of erudition, and of almost anchorite piety, sat at the feet of this godly German like a little child, and was content to be thought a fool that he might be wise. "My brother, my brother," said Bohler, "that philosophy of yours must be purged away;" and purged away it was. Wesley thought that, being without faith, he ought to leave off preaching. But Bohler replied: "By no means. Preach faith till you have it; and then, because you have it, you will preach it;" and, on the 6th of March, he began to preach accordingly. Meanwhile several of his friends, as his brother Charles, Mr. Gambold, and Mr. Stonehouse, vicar of Islington, had embraced the doctrine of salvation by faith only; and two, Whitefield, and Mr. Hutchins, of Pembroke College, had experienced it.[2] Charles Wesley also, on Whit-Sunday, May 21, was made a partaker of the same great blessing. At the time, he was ill of pleurisy, and his brother and some other friends came to him, and sang a hymn of praise to the Holy Ghost; and, after they were gone, he was enabled to exercise that faith in Christ of the want of which he had been recently convinced, and was filled with love and peace. Wesley himself was still a mourner. His heart was heavy. He felt that there was no good in him; and that all his works, his righteousness, and his prayers, so far from having merit, needed an atonement for themselves. His mouth was stopped. He knew that he deserved nothing but wrath; and yet he heard a voice, saying, "Believe, and thou

[1] Priestley's Letters, p. 65. [2] *Methodist Magazine*, 1821, p. 439.

1738 Age 35 shalt be saved;" "he that believeth is passed from death unto life." Three more days of anguish were thus passed; and then, on May 24, at five in the morning, he opened his Testament on these words: "There are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine nature." On leaving home, he opened on the text, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." In the afternoon, he went to St. Paul's Cathedral, where the anthem was full of comfort. At night, he went to a society-meeting in Aldersgate Street, where a person read Luther's preface to the epistle to the Romans, in which Luther teaches what faith is, and also that faith alone justifies. Possessed of it, the heart is "cheered, elevated, excited, and transported with sweet affections towards God." Receiving the Holy Ghost, through faith, the man "is renewed and made spiritual," and he is impelled to fulfil the law "by the vital energy in himself." While this preface was being read, Wesley experienced an amazing change. He writes: "I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me, that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death; and I then testified openly to all there, what I now first felt in my heart." Towards ten o'clock, a troop of friends took him to his brother; they sang a hymn with joy; and then parted with a prayer.[1]

To add to this would be folly. The questions proposed have been answered from Wesley's own writings. For ten years he had believed in Christ, but never believed as he did now. He had been intensely pious; but now he possessed power over himself and sin which he had not possessed before. He had practised religion; but now he experienced its bliss. According to his own sermon, written nearly half a century subsequent to this, he was, as a *servant* of God, *accepted*, and was *safe*; but now he *knew* it, and was *happy* as well as *safe*. There was sunshine in his soul, which lit up his face, and which turned the severe ascetic, for a season at least, into a joyful saint.

[1] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. i., p. 95.

Having given, as briefly and as clearly as we can, an account of the way in which Wesley, after ten years of earnest prayer, rigorous fasting, and self-sacrificing piety, was brought into the blissful enjoyment of a conscious salvation, this may be a fitting place to notice the man, by whose instrumentality he was taught the nature and fruits of saving faith. 1738 Age 35

Peter Bohler was born at Frankfort, on the last day of the year 1712. He was educated in the university of Jena, where he also studied theology. When sixteen years of age, he joined the Moravians; and when twenty-five, he was ordained for the work of the ministry by Count Zinzendorf, this being the first time that the count exercised his episcopal functions. Immediately after his ordination, Bohler set out for London, on his way to Carolina; and here it was that Wesley first met him. Wesley introduced him to James Hutton, and procured him lodgings. Charles Wesley began to teach him English; and a tailor, of the name of Viney, interpreted his Latin addresses in the Moravian meetings. Questions were asked him, and he simply answered them from the Holy Scriptures. His exposition of saving faith was new, even to the London Moravians; and, "to their astonishment, they saw, for the first time, that he who believeth in Jesus hath everlasting life; and it was with indescribable joy that they embraced the doctrine of justification through faith in Christ, and of freedom by it from the dominion and guilt of sin."[1] Marvellous blessings attended Bohler's interpreted discourses; and a work was begun, says Wesley, "such as will never come to an end, till heaven and earth pass away."

"I travelled," writes Bohler to Zinzendorf, "with the two brothers, John and Charles Wesley, from London to Oxford. The elder, John, is a good-natured man: he knew he did not properly believe on the Saviour, and was willing to be taught. His brother, with whom you often conversed a year ago, is at present very much distressed in his mind, but does not know how he shall begin to be acquainted with the Saviour. Our mode of believing in the Saviour is so easy to Englishmen, that they cannot reconcile themselves to it; if it were a little more artful, they would much sooner find their way into it.

[1] Hutton's Memoirs, p. 27.

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Of faith in Jesus they have no other idea than the generality of people have. They justify themselves; and, therefore, they always take it for granted, that they believe already, and try to prove their faith by their works, and thus so plague and torment themselves that they are at heart very miserable."[1]

These are weighty words on the simplicity of saving faith, and well deserve pondering by both the ministers and members of the church at the present day.

Wesley had found peace with God; but, for the encouragement of new converts, let it be remembered that his joy in the Holy Ghost was not unbroken. The same night, he "was much buffeted with temptations, which returned again and again." The day after, "the enemy injected a fear" that the change was not great enough, and therefore that his faith was not real. On May 26, his "soul continued in peace, but yet in heaviness because of manifold temptations." On the 27th, there was a want of joy, which led him to resolve to spend the time of every morning, until he went to church, in unceasing prayer. On the 31st, he "grieved the Spirit of God, not only by not watching unto prayer, but likewise by speaking with sharpness, instead of tender love, of one who was not sound in the faith. Immediately God hid His face, and he was troubled and in heaviness till the next morning." But, in the midst of all, he kept waiting upon God continually, read the New Testament, conquered temptations, and gained increasing power to trust and to rejoice in God his Saviour. He had to fight; but he was not, as formerly, subdued.

He went to Oxford; but the whole of his old Methodist friends were now dispersed. Here he preached his celebrated sermon in St. Mary's, before the university, on the text, "By grace are ye saved, through faith;" a sermon which, in November following, was published by James Hutton, pp. 25, price threepence. In this discourse, he showed that the faith through which we are saved is not barely the faith of a heathen, who believes that God is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him; nor, secondly, is it the faith of a devil, who, in addition to the faith of a heathen, believes that Jesus is the Son of God, the Christ, the Saviour of the

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1854, p. 687.

world; nor, thirdly, is it barely the faith which the apostles had while Christ was yet upon earth, although they so believed in Christ as to leave all and follow Him, had power to work miracles, and were sent to preach; but, fourthly, "it is a full reliance on the blood of Christ,—a trust in the merits of His life, death, and resurrection,—a recumbency upon Him as our atonement and our life, as given for us and living in us; and, in consequence hereof, a closing with Him and cleaving to Him, as our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, or, in one word, our salvation."

The salvation obtained by such a faith is described as being a salvation—(1) From the guilt of all past sin; (2) From servile fear; (3) From the power of sin. The man having it is pardoned; he has the witness of the Spirit that he is a child of God; he is born again; and he lives without sin.

Wesley further answers objections to this doctrine, and shows that to preach salvation by faith only is not to preach against holiness and good works; neither does it lead men into pride, nor drive them to despair. He maintains that never was the preaching of this doctrine more seasonable than now, and that nothing else can effectually prevent the increase of the popish delusion. It was this which drove Popery out of the kingdom, and it is this alone that can keep it out.

This remarkable sermon was preached eighteen days after Wesley's conversion—not on June 18, as is stated in Wesley's collected works, but on June 11. Well would it be if, at the present day, the same great doctrine were as plainly preached as Wesley preached it. For want of it, the church is gliding into a sort of religious scepticism; and this, above all things else, would prove a check to the spread of the popish errors and practices, which are too successfully setting at defiance all the wisdom and power of man to prevent their triumph.

In the same year Wesley published another sermon, "On God's Free Grace,"[1] in which he gave equal prominence to another great Bible truth, namely, that "the grace or love of God, whence cometh our salvation, is *free in all*, and *free for all*." And then, in defence of himself as a good Churchman, he issued a small 12mo pamphlet of sixteen pages, entitled

[1] *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1738, p. 608.

1738 Age 35 "The Doctrine of Salvation, Faith, and Good Works: extracted from the Homilies of the Church of England." Here he shows that the doctrine of that Church is, that the sinner is justified by faith only; and yet this faith does not exclude repentance, hope, love, and fear of God; but shuts them out from the office of justifying. "So that, although they be all present together in him that is justified, yet they justify not altogether." "Neither does faith shut out good works, necessary to be done afterwards; but we are not to do them with the intent of being justified by doing them." He further shows that "justification is the office of God only,—a blessing which we receive of Him by His free mercy, through the only merits of His beloved Son." He adds: "the right and true Christian faith is not only to believe that holy Scripture and the articles of our faith are true, but also to have a sure trust and confidence to be saved from everlasting damnation by Christ; whereof doth follow a loving heart to obey His commandments." He maintains further that, without this true saving faith, the works we do cannot be good and acceptable in the sight of God. "Faith giveth life to the soul, and they are as much dead to God who want faith, as they are to the world whose bodies want souls. Without faith all we do is but dead before God, be it ever so glorious before man."

Such then were the great doctrines which Wesley grasped, and began to preach in 1738. It was the preaching of these doctrines that gave birth to the greatest revival of religion chronicled in the history of the church of Christ. From such doctrines Wesley never wavered; and God forbid that they should ever be abandoned, or even partially neglected, by any of Wesley's successors. They are not Moravian whims, or the fancies of fanatics. They are a great deal more than even Bible truths of subordinate importance. They are essentially and vitally connected with man's salvation both here and hereafter, and no church has ever prospered except in proportion as its ministers have prominently and faithfully taught and enforced them in their congregations.

It may reasonably be asked how was it that Wesley—the son of a most able divine of the Church of England, and himself a man of extensive learning, and a devoted student of Christian truth—how was it, that he lived so long without a

knowledge of one of the greatest, and yet most clearly taught doctrines of the holy Bible, the doctrine of the sinner's salvation by faith alone? Wesley himself tells us: from early life he had been warned against the papistical error of laying too much stress on outward works. After this, he read certain Lutheran and Calvinist authors, whose confused and indigested expositions magnified faith to such an amazing size that it quite hid all the rest of the commandments. In this labyrinth he was bewildered. He wished, on the one hand, to avoid the popish doctrine of salvation by works; but, in doing this, he was beset, on the other hand, with an uncouth hypothesis concerning salvation by faith, which he found it impossible to reconcile either with Scripture or common sense. From these well meaning but wrong headed writers, he turned to authors like Beveridge, Nelson, and Jeremy Taylor, by whom his difficulties were, to some extent, relieved; but even these he found interpreting Scripture in different ways, and he was nearly as much confused as ever. After this, he was taught that he ought to interpret the Bible by the general teachings of the ancient church. Adopting this rule, he, for a season, made antiquity a co-ordinate rather than sub-ordinate rule with Scripture, and, by extending his antiquity principle too far, his confusion of mind became greater instead of less. He then became acquainted with the Mystics, whose "noble descriptions of union with God, and internal religion, made everything else appear mean and flat;" yet here again, on reflection, he found that he was wrong. Mysticism was nothing like the religion which Christ and His apostles lived and taught.[1] Thus was this sincere and earnest inquirer after truth led to and fro in a wilderness of perplexing entanglements, until Peter Bohler took him by the hand, and led him as a contrite sinner to the cross of Christ.

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Ten days before his conversion, Wesley wrote a somewhat petulant letter to William Law, telling him that he did so in obedience to what he considered the call of God. He informs him that, for two years, he had been preaching after the model of his "Serious Call," and "Christian Perfection," and that the

[1] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 344.

1738 Age 35 result had been to convince the people that the law of God was holy, but that, when they attempted to fulfil it, they found themselves without power. Wesley declares that he himself was in this state, and might have groaned in it till he died if he had not been directed to Peter Bohler. He then proceeds :—

"Now, sir, suffer me to ask, how will you answer it to our common Lord, that you never gave me this advice? Did you never read the Acts of the Apostles, or the answer of Paul to him who said, 'What must I do to be saved?' Or are you wiser than he? Why did I scarce ever hear you name the name of Christ? Never so as to ground anything upon faith in His blood? Who is this who is laying another foundation? If you say you advised other things as preparatory to this, what is this but laying a foundation below the foundation? If you say you advised them because you knew that I had faith already, verily you knew nothing of me. I know that I had not faith, unless the faith of a devil, the faith of Judas: that speculative, notional, airy shadow, which lives in the head not in the heart. But what is this to the living, justifying faith in the blood of Jesus? the faith that cleanseth from sin, that gives us to have free access to the Father; to rejoice in hope of the glory of God; to have the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which dwelleth in us, and the Spirit itself bearing witness with our spirits that we are the children of God?

"I beseech you, sir, by the mercies of God, to consider deeply and impartially whether the true reason of your never pressing this upon me was not this—that you had it not yourself? Whether that man of God [Bohler] was not in the right, who gave this account of a late interview he had with you? 'I began speaking to him of faith in Christ: he was silent. Then he began to speak of mystical matters. I spake to him of faith in Christ again: he was silent. Then he began to speak of mystical matters again. I saw his state at once.'"

Wesley then adds that Bohler thought the state of Law to be a dangerous one; and intimates that Bohler's opinion was of great consequence, because he had the Spirit of God; and finally, he concludes his not too courteous epistle with: "Once more, sir, let me beg you to consider whether your extreme roughness, and morose and sour behaviour, at least on many occasions, can possibly be the fruit of a living faith in Christ?"[1]

This was an uncalled for, rough, morose attack upon a man of the greatest ability, of distinguished though mistaken piety, whose works Wesley had read with the highest admiration,

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1797, p. 149.

whose advice Wesley had sought, and who was nearly old enough to be Wesley's father. Law replied to it in a letter dated May 19, 1738. After some withering sarcasm, in reference to Wesley having written his letter in obedience to the call of God, Law proceeds to say :— 1738 Age 35

"You have had a great many conversations with me, and you never were with me for half an hour without my being large upon that very doctrine, which you make me totally silent and ignorant of. The second time I saw you I put into your hands the little book of the German theology, and said all that I could in recommendation of the doctrine contained in it. If that book does not plainly lead you to Jesus Christ, I am content to know as little of Christianity as you are pleased to believe ; or if you are for stripping yourself naked of your own works, or righteousness, further than that book directs, I had rather you were taught that doctrine by any one else than by me. Above a year ago, I published a book against the 'Plain Account of the Sacrament,' etc. You may perhaps be too much prejudiced against me to read it ; but, as you have made yourself a judge of the state of my heart, and of my knowledge in Christ, you ought to have seen that book to help you to make a right judgment of my sentiments. What I have there written I judge to be well timed after my former discourses. I have been governed through all that I have written and done by these two common, fundamental, unchangeable maxims of our Lord: '*Without Me ye can do nothing :*' '*If any man will come after Me or be My disciple, let him take up his cross and follow Me.*' If you are for separating the doctrine of the cross from faith in Christ, or following Him, you have numbers and names enough on your side, but not me."

Law continues : "Let me advise you not to be too hasty in believing that because you have changed your language you have changed your faith. The head can as easily amuse itself with a living and justifying faith in the blood of Jesus as with any other notion ; and the heart which you suppose to be a place of security, as being the seat of self-love, is more deceitful than the head."

A lengthened correspondence followed, which Mr. Law concluded thus :—"Who made me your teacher ? or can make me answerable for any defects in your knowledge ? You sought my acquaintance ; you came to me as you pleased, and on what occasion you pleased, and to say to me what you pleased. If it was my business to put this question to you, and if you have a right to charge me with guilt for the neglect of it, may you not much more reasonably accuse them who have authoritatively charge over you ? Did the Church in which

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you are educated put this question to you? Did the bishop who ordained you either deacon or priest do this for you? Did the bishop who sent you a missionary to Georgia require this of you? Pray, sir, be at peace with me."[1]

This was a miserable squabble, into which Wesley foolishly rushed, and out of which he came not victorious, but vanquished. It was an unfortunate commencement of a new Christian life, and led to an estrangement between two great and good men, which ought never to have existed. No doubt, the theology of William Law was defective; but to charge him with the guilt of Wesley's want of faith, and to accuse him of extremely rough, morose, and sour behaviour, was a deplorable outrage against good manners.

But this was not the only unpleasantness which now sprang up. The Moravian movement and the new conversions began to attract great attention and to create some alarm. As might naturally be expected, amid so much excitement, there was a mixture of extravagance. The sister of Mr. Bray dreamed that at night she heard a knock at her door, and on opening it saw a person dressed in white. She asked him who he was, and he answered, "I am Jesus Christ." She awoke in a fright, but a day or two after was filled with faith, and was commanded by an unseen power to go to Charles Wesley, who was ill, and assure him from Christ of his recovery of soul and body. In a prayer-meeting a Mr. Verding declared that he had just seen, as it were, a whole army rushing by him and bearing the broken body of Christ; a sight which was overpowering, and cast him into a cold sweat. A young man, as he entered St. Dunstan's church to receive the sacrament, was met by Christ carrying His cross in His hands: and a woman dreamed that a ball of fire fell upon her, and fired her soul. Samuel Wesley, of Tiverton, to whom these things were related, justly deemed them "downright madness;" and, in his anger, went so far as to wish that those "canting fellows," as he called the Moravians, "who talked of *indwellings*, *experiences*, *getting into Christ*," etc., had been somewhere else.[2]

[1] From a "Memorial of William Law, by Christopher Walton," printed for private circulation in 1854.

[2] C. Wesley's Journal; and Priestley's Letters.

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The chief cause of anxiety, however, arose from Mrs. Hutton's description of her two lodgers. She relates that, when the two Wesleys returned from Georgia, she received and treated them with the utmost love and tenderness; but John was now "turned a wild enthusiast." While her husband was reading to a number of people in his study a sermon of Bishop Blackall's, John Wesley stood up and told the company that, five days ago, he was not a Christian. Mr. Hutton was thunderstruck, and said, "Have a care, Mr. Wesley, how you despise the benefits received by the two sacraments;" but Wesley repeated his declaration, upon which Mrs. Hutton answered, "If you have not been a Christian ever since I knew you, you have been a great hypocrite, for you made us all believe that you were one." To this Wesley replied that, "When we renounce everything but faith and get into Christ, then, and not till then, have we any reason to believe that we are Christians."

Mrs. Hutton, in writing an account of all this to Samuel Wesley, adds that her two children had so high an opinion of Wesley's sanctity and judgment that they were in great danger of being drawn into his "wild notions;" that Wesley had "abridged the life of one Halyburton, a Presbyterian teacher in Scotland," and that her son had designed to print it, but she and her husband had forbidden him to promote such "rank fanaticism;" and that all his converts were "directed to get an assurance of their sins being pardoned," and to expect this in "an instant." She acknowledges that the two Wesleys "are men of great parts and learning;" but they were now under a "strange delusion;" and she entreats their brother Samuel to stop this "wildfire," if he can.

Samuel Wesley's reply is dated, "Tiverton, June 17, 1738." He writes:—

"I am sufficiently sensible of yours and Mr. Hutton's kindness to my brothers, and shall always acknowledge it. Falling into enthusiasm is being lost with a witness; and, if you are troubled for two of your children, you may be sure I am so for two whom I may, in some sense, call *mine*. What Jack means by his not being a Christian till last month, I understand not. Had he never been in covenant with God? Then, as Mr. Hutton observed, baptism was nothing. Had he totally apostatized from it? I dare say not; and yet he must either be unbaptized, or an apostate, to make his words true

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"If renouncing everything but faith means rejecting all merit of our own good works, what Protestant does not do that? Even Bellarmine on his death-bed is said to have renounced all merits but those of Christ. But if this renouncing regards good works in any other sense, as being unnecessary, it is wretchedly wicked.

"I hope your son does not think it as plainly revealed that he shall print an enthusiastic book, as it is, that he should obey his father and his mother. God deliver us from visions that shall make the law of God vain! I pleased myself with the expectation of seeing Jack; but now I am afraid of it. I know not where to direct to him, or where he is. I will write to Charles as soon as I can. In the meantime I heartily pray God to stop the progress of this lunacy."[1]

Samuel asked his brother what he meant by being made a Christian. John replied:—

"By a Christian, I mean one who so believes in Christ as that sin hath no more dominion over him; and, in this obvious sense of the word, I was not a Christian till the 24th of May last past. Till then sin had dominion over me, although I fought with it continually; but, from that time to this, it hath not. Such is the free grace of God in Christ. If you ask me, by what means I am made free? I answer, by faith in Christ; by such a sort or degree of faith as I had not till that day. Some measure of this faith, which bringeth salvation or victory over sin, and which implies peace and trust in God through Christ, I now enjoy by His free mercy; though in very deed it is in me but as a grain of mustard seed. For the '*πληροφορια πιστεως*,—the seal of the Spirit, the love of God shed abroad in my heart, and producing joy in the Holy Ghost, joy which no man taketh away, joy unspeakable and full of glory,'—this witness of the Spirit I have not; but I wait patiently for it. I know many who have already received it; and, having seen and spoken with a cloud of witnesses abroad,[2] as well as in my own country, I cannot doubt but that believers who wait and pray for it will find these scriptures fulfilled in themselves. My hope is, that they will be fulfilled in me. I build on Christ, the Rock of Ages."[3]

The reader will observe here a strange confession, which has seldom, if ever, been noticed. The letter, from which the above is taken, was written October 23, 1738, five months after Wesley's conversion; and yet he here distinctly states that, as yet, he was not possessed of the witness of the Spirit; but was waiting for it. This is contrary to the commonly received notion, and yet it is in perfect accordance with a

[1] Priestley's Letters.

[2] This letter was written after Wesley's visit to Germany, which will be noticed shortly

[3] Priestley's Letters, p. 83.

remarkable entry in his journal, under the date of October 14. He there most carefully examines his religious state by comparing it with the text, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." In many respects, he judged himself a new creature; but, in others, he feared that he was not. Earthly desires often arose within him, though he was enabled to put them under his feet through Christ strengthening him. To some extent, he possessed longsuffering, gentleness, meekness, and temperance; but he had to complain of his want of love, peace, and joy. He writes:— 1738 Age 35

"I cannot find in myself the love of God, or of Christ. Hence my deadness and wanderings in public prayer: hence it is that, even in the holy communion, I have frequently no more than a cold attention. Again, I have not that joy in the Holy Ghost; no settled, lasting joy. Nor have I such a peace as excludes the possibility either of fear or doubt. When holy men have told me I had no faith, I have often doubted whether I had or no. And these doubts have made me very uneasy, till I was relieved by prayer and the holy Scriptures. Yet, upon the whole, although I have not yet that joy in the Holy Ghost, nor the full assurance of faith,—much less am I, in the full sense of the words, 'in Christ a new creature,'—I nevertheless trust that I have a measure of faith, and am 'accepted in the Beloved;' I trust 'the handwriting that was against me is blotted out,' and that I am 'reconciled to God' through His Son."

There is another entry, similar to this, under the date of December 16; and again, on January 4, 1739, he uses even stronger language:—

"My friends affirm I am mad, because I said I was not a Christian a year ago. I affirm, I am not a Christian now. Indeed, what I might have been I know not, had I been faithful to the grace then given, when, expecting nothing less, I received such a sense of the forgiveness of my sins as till then I never knew. But that I am not a Christian at this day, I as assuredly know, as that Jesus is the Christ. For a Christian is one who has the fruits of the Spirit of Christ, which (to mention no more) are love, peace, joy. But these I have not. I have not any love of God. I do not love either the Father or the Son. Do you ask, how do I know whether I love God, I answer by another question, 'How do you know whether you love me?' Why, as you know whether you are hot or cold. You feel this moment that you do or do not love me. And I feel this moment I do not love God; which therefore I know, because I feel it. And I know it also by St. John's plain rule, 'If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.' For I love the world. I desire the things of the world, some or other of them; and have done all my life. I have always

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placed some part of my happiness in some or other of the things that are seen, particularly in meat and drink, and in the company of those I loved. For many years, I have been, yea, and still am, hankering after a happiness, in loving and being loved by one or another. And in these I have, from time to time, taken more pleasure than in God.

"Again, joy in the Holy Ghost I have not. I have now and then some starts of joy in God; but it is not that joy. For it is not abiding. Neither is it greater than I have had on some worldly occasions. So that I can in nowise be said to 'rejoice evermore'; much less to 'rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.'

"Yet again: I have not 'the peace of God'; that peace, peculiarly so called. The peace I have may be accounted for on natural principles. I have health, strength, friends, a competent fortune, and a composed, cheerful temper. Who would not have a sort of peace in such circumstances? But I have none which can, with any propriety, be called 'a peace which passeth all understanding.'

"From hence I conclude, though I have given, and do give, all my goods to feed the poor, I am not a Christian. Though I have endured hardship, though I have in all things denied myself and taken up my cross, I am not a Christian. My works are nothing; my sufferings are nothing; I have not the fruits of the Spirit of Christ. Though I have constantly used all the means of grace for twenty years, I am not a Christian."

This is extremely puzzling; but we are bound to give it as we find it. It may be said that Wesley merely says, that "one who had had the form of godliness many years wrote these reflections"; but comparing them with the two entries under the dates of October 14 and December 16, 1738, and with his letter to his brother Samuel, dated October 30, it would be folly to contend that he was not relating his own experience. The reader must form his own opinion, and grapple with the difficulties, thus presented, as he best can. Wesley acknowledges, in the above extract, that, some months before, he "received such a sense of the forgiveness of his sins as till then he never knew"; and yet here we find him full of doubt, and writing the bitterest things against himself.

Let us pursue his correspondence with his brother Samuel a little farther. Wesley held the doctrine of the Spirit's witness; though he asserts he did not yet experience it. Samuel, in a letter dated November 15, 1738, asks his brother "whether he will own or disown, in terms, the necessity of a sensible information from God of pardon?"[1] This was not a

[1] Priestley's Letters, p. 88.

fair putting of the question. Wesley had defined the πληροφορια πιστεως, or witness of the Spirit, as "the love of God shed abroad in the heart, producing joy which no man taketh away; joy unspeakable and full of glory:" but his brother here changes the term *witness*, and what it meant, to the term "*sensible information*," that is, information received through the senses, thus connecting with the witness visions and voices, and other Moravian follies at that time rampant. 1738 Age 35

A fortnight later Wesley replied to this:—

"I believe every Christian, who has not yet received it, should pray for the witness of God's Spirit that he is a child of God. This witness, I believe, is necessary for my salvation. How far invincible ignorance may excuse others I know not. But this, you say, is delusive and dangerous, because it encourages and abets idle visions and dreams. It may do this accidentally, but not essentially; but this is no objection against it; for, in the same way, weak minds may pervert to an idle use every truth in the oracles of God. Such visions, indeed, as you mention are given up; but does it follow that visions and dreams in general are bad branches of a bad root? God forbid. This would prove more than you desire."[1]

In answer, Samuel, on December 13, declares that his brother misinterprets the witness of the Spirit, and refers him to a sermon of Bishop Bull's in proof. John replies, that Bishop Bull's sermon is full of gross perversions of Scripture; and adds: "I find more persons, day by day, who experience a clear evidence of their being in a state of salvation; but I never said this continues equally clear in all, as long as they continue in a state of salvation."[2]

Samuel's answer is dated Tiverton, March 26, 1739, in which he argues that the witness of the Spirit is not necessary to salvation; and refers, in proof of this, to the case of baptized infants, and to persons of a gloomy constitution.[3]

Nine days afterwards, Wesley re-asserted that he had seen many persons changed in a moment from the spirit of horror, fear, and despair, to the spirit of hope, joy, and peace; and from sinful desires, till then reigning over them, to a pure desire of doing the will of God. He also knew that this great change, in several persons, had been wrought either in sleep, or during a strong representation, to the eye of their minds, of

[1] Whitehead's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 108.
[2] Ibid. p. 109. [3] Ibid. p. 111.

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Christ, either on the cross, or in glory. He also argues, that his brother's reference to infants and persons of a gloomy constitution fails to sustain his point; because no kind of assurance is essential to the salvation of infants; and persons of a gloomy constitution, so far from being doomed to die without the assurance, have, to his own certain knowledge even when almost mad, been brought in a moment into a state of firm, lasting peace and joy.[1]

Other letters might be quoted; but enough has been said to show the views which Wesley now held concerning the witness of the Spirit. He believed the witness was necessary to his own salvation; and, yet, he declares he has it not. He asserts that he has known instances in which it has been granted in dreams; but he does not insist that dreams are an essential medium. The whole affair is puzzling. On May 24, 1738, he "received such a sense of the forgiveness of sins as till then he never knew;" and yet, months afterwards, he declares, in the most explicit terms, that he was now living without the enjoyment of the Spirit's witness. How is this discrepancy to be explained? Had he lost the sense of forgiveness which he received on May 24? Or was he attaching to the witness of the Spirit a signification too high? If he had not the witness at the beginning of 1739, when did he obtain it afterwards? All these questions will naturally occur to the thoughtful reader; but they are more easily asked than answered.

The simple truth seems to be, that while Wesley heard much among the Moravians that was scriptural, he also heard much that was otherwise; and paid more attention to their experiences, both in England and in Germany, than was desirable, or for his good. His high opinion of the people's piety made it easy to believe even many of their foolish statements. He got into a labyrinth, and could hardly tell where he was. Months before, he had believed on Christ to the saving of his soul; and yet now he bitterly exclaims that he is not a Christian. He was, for a season, bewildered with the brightness of great truths bursting for the first time on his vision, and with the distracting glare of religious testimonies—new,

[1] Whitehead's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 112.

but yet earnest and sincere—of great importance, and yet mixed with much that was fanatical and foolish. Out of such a maze this earnest man had to find his way as he best could. We know his subsequent career, and we know the doctrines that he taught. The mists of early education, and the vapours of Moravian imagination, were soon scattered by the bright sunshine which was shed upon him; and in the midst of which, to the end of his career, he was wont to live, and to testify, "The testimony of the Spirit is an inward impression on the soul, whereby the Spirit of God directly witnesses to my spirit that I am a child of God; that Jesus Christ hath loved me, and given Himself for me; and that all my sins are blotted out, and I, even I, am reconciled to God."[1] 1738 Age 35

Wesley had been brought into strange communion with Moravians in his voyage to Georgia. At Savannah he had met with Spangenberg. On his return to London he found Bohler, and was induced to become a member of the first Moravian society, founded at Fetter Lane. The rules of that society are before us, entitled, "Orders of a Religious Society meeting in Fetter Lane; in obedience to the command of God by St. James, and by the advice of Peter Boehler, May 1, 1738." These rules provide for a meeting of the members once a week, to confess their faults one to another, and to pray for one another that they may be healed. A month later, it was agreed that the persons thus meeting in *society* should be divided into *bands*, of not fewer than five or more than ten; and that some one in each band should be desired to interrogate the rest, and should be called the leader. Each band was to meet twice a week; every person was to come punctually at the hour appointed; every meeting was to begin and end with singing and prayer; and all the bands were to have a conference every Wednesday night. Any person absenting himself from his band-meeting, without some extraordinary reason, was to be first privately admonished, and if he were absent a second time, to be reproved before the whole society. Any member, desiring or designing to take a journey, was first to have, if possible, the approbation of the bands; and all who were in clubs were requested to

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. v., p. 107.

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withdraw their names from such associations. Any one desiring to be admitted was to be asked his reasons for this, and whether he would be entirely open, using no kind of reserve, least of all in the case of love or courtship. Every fourth Saturday was to be observed as a day of general intercession, from twelve to two, from three to five, and from six to eight o'clock; and, on one Sunday in every month, a general lovefeast was to be held from seven till ten at night. In order to a continual intercession, every member was to choose some hour, either of the day or night, to spend in prayer, chiefly for his brethren; and, in order to a continual fast, three of the members were to fast every day, Sundays and holidays excepted, and spend as much of the day as possible in retirement from business and in prayer. Each person was to pay to the leader of his band, at least once a month, what he could afford towards the general expenses; and any person not conforming to the rules of the society, after being thrice admonished, was to be expelled.

Naturally enough, Wesley wished to know something more of the singular people with whom he had been brought in contact; and accordingly, three weeks after his conversion, he started for their chief settlement at Herrnhuth, in Germany. One of his companions was his friend Ingham, and another was John Toltschig,[1] one of the first fugitives who fled to Herrnhuth from the fierce persecution in Moravia in 1724.

At Rotterdam, Dr. Koker, a physician, treated them with kindness; but at Gondart several of the inns refused to entertain them, and it "was with difficulty they at last found one which did them the favour to take their money for their meat and drink, and the use of two or three bad beds."

On June 16, they arrived at Ysselstein, the home of Baron Watteville, who had been a fellow student of Count Zinzendorf, and one of the young gentlemen, at the academy in Halle, who about the year 1717 had formed an association called "The Order of the Grain of Mustard Seed," the object of which was to promote the conversion of Jews and heathen.

At the time of Wesley's visit Watteville was at the head of "a few German brethren and sisters, and about eight" English

[1] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. i., p. 106.

Moravians, who were living in three or four small houses, till one should be built large enough to contain them all. Wesley and his friends spent a day with them "in hearing the wonderful work which God was beginning to work over all the earth," and in making prayer to Him, "and giving thanks for the mightiness of His kingdom." 1738 Age 35

Proceeding to Amsterdam, Wesley and his companions were received with great courtesy by Mr. Decknatel, a minister of the Mennonists, and Dr. Barkhausen, a Muscovite physician. Here they spent four days, and attended several society meetings, where "the expounding was in high Dutch."

On Sunday, June 26, they reached Cologne, "the ugliest, dirtiest city" Wesley had ever seen. The cathedral he describes as "mere heaps upon heaps; a huge, misshapen thing, without either symmetry or neatness belonging to it." Some will doubtless differ from Wesley's judgment concerning this magnificent though unfinished pile, so venerated for its sanctity, derived from the monkish stories of the reliques of the eleven thousand virgins and of the three eastern kings. Coming out of it, one of Wesley's companions scrupled to take off his hat as a popish procession passed, when a papist cried, "Knock down the Lutheran dog," a mandate which would probably have been put into execution if the offender had not made a timely escape from the zealot's fury.

Embarking on the majestic Rhine, four days and nights were spent in reaching Mayence, the boat in which Wesley travelled being drawn by horses. This, however, gave him ample time to admire the almost unequalled beauties of one of the finest rivers in the world. Arriving faint and weary at Frankfort, they were refused admittance, because they had no passports. It so happened, however, that Peter Bohler's father was resident in the city; and, by his interposition, they procured an entrance, and were treated in the most friendly manner.

On Tuesday, July 4, they came to Marienborn, (about thirty-five miles from Frankfort,) in the neighbourhood of which Zinzendorf, two years before, had taken up his residence in an old, ruinous castle called Ronneburg, and where he had established schools for poor children, whom he fed and clothed at his own expense. Here also he had formed a missionary congregation, consisting of forty students from Jena, most of

1738 Age 35 whom became ministers either in Europe or in missions to the heathen.[1] The Moravian family altogether consisted of about ninety persons, all living in a large house rented by Zinzendorf. Here Wesley spent a fortnight, conversing with the brethren in Latin or English, listening to the sermons of the count, and attending conferences and intercession meetings. Writing to his brother Samuel, he says: "God has given me at length the desire of my heart. I am with a church whose conversation is in heaven; in whom is the mind that was in Christ, and who so walks as He walked. As they have all one Lord and one faith, so they are all partakers of one Spirit—the spirit of meekness and love, which uniformly and continually animates all their conversation. I believe, in a week, Mr. Ingham and I shall set out for Herrnhuth, about three hundred and fifty miles hence. Oh pray for us, that God would sanctify to us all those precious opportunities."[2] It is an odd fact, however, that while Ingham was allowed to partake of the holy communion, Wesley was not, because "the congregation saw him to be *homo perturbatus*, and that his head had gained an ascendancy over his heart"; and also because "they were desirous not to interfere with his plan of effecting good as a clergyman of the English Church."[3] Peculiar reasons—but we give them as we find them. Hampson, in his life of Wesley, relates that Zinzendorf, who regarded him as a pupil, ordered him one day to dig in the garden; and after Wesley had been there for some time working in his shirt, and when he was in a high state of perspiration, the lordly count commanded him to enter a carriage that was waiting, to pay a visit to a neighbouring noble. Wesley naturally wished to wash his hands and to put on his coat; but his preceptor forbade him, saying, "You must be simple, my brother!" This was a full answer to all remonstrance, and Wesley was simple enough to obey the mandate of a man who, while professing great humility, sometimes allowed the pretensions of his feudal pride to set aside the meekness of his professed piety.

On the 19th of July, Wesley again set out, and on reaching Weimar was brought before the duke, who asked his object in

[1] Holmes's History. [2] Priestley's Letters, p. 82.
[3] Hutton's Memoirs.

journeying to Herrnhuth. Wesley answered, "To see the place where the Christians live;" upon which the duke looked hard, but permitted him to go. On arriving at Halle, "the King of Prussia's tall men," who kept the gates, sent him and his friends backwards and forwards, from one gate to another, for nearly two long hours before they were admitted. Here he inspected, with the greatest interest, the Orphan House of August Herman Francke, in which six hundred and fifty children were wholly resident, and three thousand taught. At Leipsig, the gentlemen of the university treated him with respect and kindness. At Meissen, two things surprised him —the extremely beautiful china ware; and the congregation in the church, where the women wore huge fur caps in the shape of Turkish turbans; the men sat with their hats on their heads at the prayers as well as at the sermon, and the parson was decorated with a habit bedecked with gold and scarlet, and with a vast cross on both his back and breast. At Dresden, Wesley was carried from one official to another, with impertinent solemnity, for above two hours, before he was suffered to settle at his inn; and greatly wondered that common sense and common humanity allowed such a senseless, inhuman usage of strangers. 1738 Age 35

Wesley arrived at the Moravian settlement at Herrnhuth on August 1, and found it consisting of about a hundred houses built on a rising ground. The principal erection was the orphan house, in the lower part of which was the apothecary's shop, and in the upper the chapel, capable of containing six or seven hundred people. Here he spent nearly the next fortnight.

The day after his arrival, he attended a lovefeast of the married women; and on every day, at eleven, a Bible conference, at which was read a portion of Scripture in the original. He was also present at a conference for strangers, when several questions concerning justification were resolved. He embraced all opportunities of conversing with the most experienced of the brethren, concerning the great work which God had wrought within them; and with the teachers and elders concerning their church discipline.

On the Sunday, after the evening service, all the unmarried women, according to their usual custom, walked round the

1738 Age 35 town, singing praise, with instruments of music; and then, on a small hill, at a little distance from it, knelt in a circle and joined in prayer; after which they joyously repaired to their respective homes.

Four times Wesley heard Christian David preach, and also received from his own lips his private history. The boyhood of this remarkable man was spent in tending sheep, and his youth and early manhood partly at the carpenter's bench, and partly in the soldier's tent. He was a zealous papist, and crawled on his knees before images, performed penances, invoked departed saints, and went the whole round of Romish vagaries. He was twenty years old before he had even seen a Bible; after this, it became nearly the only book he read. The Bible convinced him of the errors of Popery, and he resolved to join the Lutherans. At the age of twenty-seven, he began to preach to his countrymen; numbers were converted by his artless sermons; persecution followed; the converts fled; and Herrnhuth was founded. Christian David continued preaching in Moravia, until his preaching became the topic of conversation in houses, streets, roads, and markets, and the whole country was thrown into a state of great excitement. The people assembled at each other's houses to sing hymns and to read the Bible. Shepherds chanted the praises of their Redeemer as they kept their flocks; servants at their work talked of nothing but His great salvation; and children on village greens poured out their fervent prayers before Him. Many were imprisoned; others were thrust into cellars and made to stand in water till they were well-nigh frozen; not a few were loaded with irons and obliged to work as convicts; and a whole host were condemned to pay heavy fines. All this arose out of the preaching of the unlettered preacher whom Wesley heard at Herrnhuth,—the *Bush Preacher*, as he was called by the persecuting priests and jesuits of Moravia,—the man who, five years previous to Wesley's present visit, conducted the first missionaries to Greenland, and who, though but a poor mechanic, preached to the court of the king of Denmark as he went,—an itinerant evangelist of no mean order, having paid eleven gospel visits to Moravia, three to Greenland, and many others to Denmark, England, and Holland, besides visiting all the Moravian congregations throughout the whole of

Germany,—a man who, when he happened to be at home at Herrnhuth, and not engaged in active services for the church, always followed his trade as a carpenter, and secured the respect and love of both young and old,—a man who often made mistakes, but was always ready to confess his errors when pointed out to him,—deeply devoted to the work of Christ, and living in the closest communion with Him,—shunning no toil, and fearing no danger,—reading the Bible continually, and never tiring of its precious truths,—his sermons wanting in polish, but not in power,—for more than thirty years an itinerant, out-door German preacher,—and who in 1751, at the age of sixty, went triumphantly to heaven.[1] 1738 Æt. 35

Such was the preaching mechanic whom Wesley, the scholar and the priest, embraced every opportunity of hearing during his Herrnhuth visit,—a fair specimen of scores in England whom Wesley, during the next half-century, employed in the same glorious work. The philosopher may sneer at the sight of one of the most distinguished fellows of Lincoln College sitting in the Herrnhuth chapel and in the carpenter's cottage, to be taught by a man like this; but let it be remembered that while the Oxford student, in letters, was immeasurably superior to the German mechanic, the German mechanic was as much superior to the Oxford student in the science of saving truth; and besides that, he spoke not only from clear convictions, but from personal experience. Even now many a man, profoundly learned in languages and in philosophy, might receive knowledge more important than any he already has, if he would condescend to imitate Wesley's example, and stoop to be taught by some poor itinerating preacher, who, though a wayfaring man, and in all other things a fool, is yet "wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

The four sermons which Wesley heard Christian David preach were peculiarly appropriate to his present religious state. It is a notable fact, however, that instead of instructing Wesley to expect the witness of the Spirit immediately, he taught him "that many are children of God and heirs of the promises, long before they are comforted by the abiding

[1] Holmes's History, etc.

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witness of the Spirit, melting their souls into all gentleness and meekness; and much more before they are pure in heart from all self-will and sin." Christian David told Wesley, in private, that he had "the forgiveness of sins, and a measure of the peace of God, for many years before he had that witness of the Spirit which shut out all doubt and fear." This is not *Wesleyan* doctrine; but it was the doctrine which Wesley was taught in Germany, and which helped to keep him in that doubting and fearing state in which we have already seen him.

Wesley elicited the religious experience of Michael Linner, the oldest member of the church, which was to the effect that Michael believed to the saving of his soul two years before he received the full assurance of faith; though he admitted that the more usual method is for the Holy Spirit "to give, in one and the same moment, the forgiveness of sins, and a full assurance of that forgiveness." David Nitschmann, one of the four public teachers of the Herrnhuth community, told Wesley that, for years after he was delivered from the bondage of sin, he was troubled with doubts and fears. Martin Döber stated: "It is common for persons to receive justification through faith in the blood of Christ before they receive the full assurance of faith, which God many times withholds till He has tried whether they will work together with Him in the use of the first gift." Augustine Neusser said he could not tell the hour or day when he first received the full assurance that his sins were pardoned; for it was not given at once, but grew within him by degrees. David Schneider's experience was substantially the same; but it is right to add, that the experience of others was of a brighter kind, and confirmative of the scriptural doctrine that, when sins are forgiven, the Spirit, at the same moment, gives the assurance of it.

Wesley eagerly listened to the recital of these religious experiences at Herrnhuth, and became bewildered; and hence those puzzling declarations concerning his own religious state, even down to the beginning of 1739, which have been already given. The truth is, both Wesley and the Moravians seemed to confound the doctrine of the Spirit's witness with the doctrine of sanctification. Because they were not, for a season, wholly sanctified, they declare that they had not the witness

of the Spirit or the full assurance of faith. The following, for instance, is Arvid Gradin's description of that witness or assurance: "Repose in the blood of Christ; a firm confidence in God, and persuasion of His favour; serene peace and steadfast tranquillity of mind, with a deliverance from every fleshly desire, and from every outward and inward sin." This is a beautiful description of what the Methodists mean by entire sanctification; but Wesley, taught by the Herrnhuth Moravians, confounded it, for a time, with what he called "the witness of the Spirit,—the full assurance of faith;" the result being the use of language, in reference to himself, quite sufficient to perplex the modern Methodist, who, without paying attention to these Moravian facts, contents himself with merely comparing the lucid language of Wesley's sermons with the confused and confusing language of those parts of Wesley's journal to which we are now adverting. 1738 Age 35

Wesley spent nearly a fortnight among the Herrnhuth Christians. He writes:—"I would gladly have spent my life here. Oh when shall this Christianity cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea?" The population was divided into about ninety bands, each of which met twice at least, but most of them three times, a week, to "confess their faults one to another, and to pray for one another that they might be healed." The rulers of the church had a conference every week, purely concerning the state of souls; and another every day on the outward matters of the church. Once a week, there was a conference for strangers; at which any one might be present, and propose questions or doubts which he desired to have resolved. The children and young people were taught reading, writing, arithmetic, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, English, history, and geography. Every morning at eight, the community had singing, Scripture exposition, and commonly short prayer; and the same at eight in the evening, concluding each service with the kiss of peace. On Sundays, service began at six; at nine, they had public worship at Bertholdsdorf; at one, the members of the church were divided into fourteen classes, to each of which was addressed a separate exhortation; at four, there was service again at Bertholdsdorf; and at eight, the usual nightly service; after which the young men went round the town singing songs of praise; and thus

1738 Age 35 the day was ended. On the first Saturday of every month, the Lord's supper was administered: when, from ten till two, the eldest spoke with each communicant in private, concerning his or her spiritual experience; at two, they dined, and then washed one another's feet; after which they sung and prayed; about ten at night, they received the communion in silence without any ceremony; and continued without speaking, till midnight, when they parted. The second Saturday was occupied as the solemn prayer-day for the children. The third was a day of general intercession and thanksgiving. And the fourth was the great monthly conference of all the superiors of the church. For the last eleven years, they had kept up a perpetual intercession, which had never ceased day or night, by different companies spending in succession an hour every day in prayer for themselves and for other churches. Marriage was highly reverenced, and no young people were allowed to be affianced without being placed for a time with married persons, who instructed them how to behave in their contemplated new relation. Casting lots was used both in public and private, to decide points of importance, when the reasons on each side appeared to be of equal weight. The time usually spent in sleep was from eleven at night till four in the morning; three hours a day were allowed for meals; leaving sixteen for work and sacred services.

Such was Herrnhuth in 1738, the cradle of the modern Moravian church,—the Jerusalem of the United Brethren. At present it has about a thousand inhabitants, is well built, well paved, and scrupulously clean; having in its centre a large square, in which stands the hall for worship, at the original consecration of which Zinzendorf offered the striking prayer, "May God prevent this house standing longer than it continues to be a dwelling place of love and peace to the praise of the Redeemer!" On one side of the square is what was once the residence of Zinzendorf, now the depôt of Moravian archives; on another, the house of the unmarried brethren; and on a third, the village inn, the property of the community. Connection with the brotherhood, except in special cases conceded by their church authorities, is a condition of residence in the town; and up to 1848, by the laws of Saxony, any one who forsook the faith could be compelled to sell what-

ever property he had within its boundaries. This is now altered, and the only compulsion that can be exercised is of a moral character. Still, even yet, with the exception of the government officials, and a few privileged individuals, the entire community are members of the Moravian church. Here sprang up that wondrous brotherhood, which, whilst other churches were surrendering the great doctrines of the cross, devoted its life and energies to their world-wide propagation, and, with a faith which to some seemed presumption, and a love which approached to the character of a reverential friendship, went among slumbering peoples and savage races, insisting on the necessity of personal faith in a personal Redeemer, and declaring that life in Christ is the highest life of man.[1] 1738 Age 35

Wesley left Herrnhuth on August 12, and reached London on Saturday, September 16. He at once resumed his work by preaching thrice the next day, and afterwards expounding in the Minories. On Monday, he rejoiced to meet with the Moravian society at Fetter Lane, which had increased from ten members to thirty-two; and, on Tuesday, he went to the condemned felons in Newgate, and preached to them a free salvation.

A month subsequent to his return, he wrote as follows to his Herrnhuth friends :—

"To the church of God which is in Herrnhuth, John Wesley, an unworthy presbyter of the church of God in England, wisheth all grace and peace in our Lord Jesus Christ. Glory be to God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! for giving me to be an eye-witness of your faith and love and holy conversation in Christ Jesus. We are endeavouring here to be followers of you, as ye are of Christ. Fourteen have been added to us since our return, so that we have now eight bands, all of whom seek for salvation only in the blood of Christ. As yet, we have only two small bands of women; the one of three, the other of five persons. But here are many others, who only wait till we have leisure to instruct them how they may most effectually build up one another in the faith and love of Him who gave Himself for them.

"Though my brother and I are not permitted to preach in most of the churches in London, yet there are others left, wherein we have liberty to speak the truth as it is in Jesus. Likewise, every evening, and on set evenings in the week, at two several places, we publish the word of recon-

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1856, p. 1028.

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ciliation, sometimes to twenty or thirty, sometimes to fifty or sixty, sometimes to three or four hundred persons, met together to hear it. We begin and end all our meetings with singing and prayer; and we know that our Lord heareth prayer, having more than once or twice received our petitions in that very hour.

"Nor hath He left Himself without other witnesses of His grace and truth. Ten ministers I know now in England, who lay the right foundation, 'the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin.' Over and above whom I have found one Anabaptist, and one, if not two, of the teachers among the Presbyterians here, who I hope love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and teach the way of God in truth."[1]

There are three facts in the above quotation which deserve notice: 1. That Wesley was thoroughly identified with the London Moravians. 2. That there were other clergymen besides himself who were evangelical. 3. That he still retained his high church nonsense, and made a difference between Church of England "*ministers*," and Anabaptist and Presbyterian "*teachers*." This last was pitiable folly, perhaps not to be wondered at, and yet deserving to be despised.

About the same time, Wesley wrote to Zinzendorf at Marienborn, thanking him and his countess for their kindness, and then adding:—

"I did not return hither at all before the time; for though a great door and effectual had been opened, the adversaries had laid so many stumbling-blocks before it, that the weak were daily turned out of the way. Numberless misunderstandings had arisen, by means of which the way of truth was much blasphemed; and, hence, had sprung anger, clamour, bitterness, evil speaking, envyings, strifes, railings, evil surmises; whereby the enemy had gained such an advantage over the little flock, that 'of the rest durst no man join himself to them.' But it has now pleased our blessed Master to remove, in great measure, these rocks of offence. The word of the Lord again runs and is glorified; and this work goes on and prospers. Great multitudes are everywhere awakened, and cry out, 'What must we do to be saved?' The love and zeal of our brethren in Holland and Germany, particularly at Herrnhuth, have stirred up many among us, who will not be comforted till they also partake of the great and precious promises. I hope to see them at least once more, were it only to speak freely on a few things which I did not approve, perhaps because I did not understand them."[2]

The last sentence requires explanation. Notwithstanding his general admiration of the German Moravians, their sun

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 51. [2] Ibid. vol. xii., p. 50.

was not without spots, for there were sundry things with which Wesley was not satisfied. What were they? Wesley himself shall answer. The following is an unfinished letter, written to the Moravians at Marienborn and Herrnhuth, a few days only after Wesley's return from Germany, but which was never sent:— 1738 Age 35

"My dear Brethren,—I cannot but rejoice in your stedfast faith, in your love to our blessed Redeemer, your deadness to the world, your meekness, temperance, chastity, and love of one another. I greatly approve of your conferences and bands; of your methods of instructing children; and, in general, of your great care of the souls committed to your charge.

"But of some other things I stand in doubt, which I will mention in love and meekness.

"Is not the count all in all among you?

"Do you not magnify your own church too much?

"Do you not use guile and dissimulation in many cases?

"Are you not of a close, dark, reserved temper and behaviour?"[1]

These were weighty accusations, and will claim attention hereafter.

Within five weeks after Wesley had returned from Germany, he and his brother Charles waited upon Dr. Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London, to answer the complaints he had heard against them, to the effect that they preached an absolute assurance of salvation. Gibson was a man of great natural abilities, a laborious student, and also pious; but he was occasionally betrayed into intolerance, and sometimes evinced more zeal for the rights of the Church than discretion. So great was his ecclesiastical power, that Sir Robert Walpole was accustomed to be reproached with allowing him the authority of a pope: "And a very good pope he is," replied the premier. The two Wesleys being introduced to him, he said, "If by assurance you mean an inward persuasion, whereby a man is conscious in himself, after examining his life by the law of God, and weighing his own sincerity, that he is in a state of salvation, and acceptable to God, I don't see how any good Christian can be without such assurance." The Wesleys meant more by "assurance" than this; but the doctrine, so far as it went, was one which they themselves

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. viii., p. 365.

738 Age 35 preached. The next point discussed was the charge that they were Antinomians, because they preached justification by faith only. To this they replied, "Can any one preach otherwise, who agrees to our church and the Scriptures?" A third charge was that they had administered baptism to persons dissatisfied with the lay baptism which they had already received. Wesley answered, with more high church bigotry than scriptural enlightenment, that "if a person dissatisfied with lay baptism," or, in other words, Dissenters' baptism, "should desire episcopal, he should think it his duty to administer it." Wesley next inquired of his lordship if "his reading in a religious society made it a conventicle;" and whether "religious societies are conventicles." To the latter question the bishop answered, "I think not; but I determine nothing;" and he recommended them to read the acts and laws on the subject for themselves. They then requested that he would not, in future, receive an accusation against them, but at the mouth of two or three witnesses. He said, "No, by no means; and you may have free access to me at all times." They thanked his lordship, and departed.[1]

This was the first muttering of the storm soon to burst upon them. William Warburton was not yet a bishop, but he was already a vigorous and well known writer, and rector of Brand Broughton, in Lincolnshire. This hot-headed parson was one of the first to fall foul upon the poor Methodists. Writing to Des Maizeaux, in 1738, he says:—

"What think you of our new set of fanatics, called the Methodists? There is one Wesley, who told a friend of mine, that he had lived most deliciously last summer in Georgia, sleeping under trees, and feeding on boiled maize, sauced with the ashes of oak leaves; and that he will return thither, and then will cast off his English dress, and wear a dried skin, like the savages, the better to ingratiate himself with them. It would be well for virtue and religion if this humour would lay hold generally of our overheated bigots, and send them to cool themselves in the Indian marshes."

In another letter, written in the same year to Dr. Birch, he says:—

"A couple of these Methodists, of whom Wesley was one, travelling

[1] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. i., p. 133.

into this neighbourhood on foot, took up their lodging with a clergyman of their acquaintance. The master of the house going into their chamber in the morning to salute them, perceived a certain vessel full of blood, and, on asking the occasion, was told it was *their method*, when the blood grew rebellious, to draw it off by breathing a vein ; that they had been heated with travel, and thought it proper to cool themselves."[1] 1738 Age 35

Such are specimens of the foul falsehoods which malignant men already circulated concerning Wesley and his companions. But, besides this, the Methodist movement began to be noticed by the pulpit. The Rev. Tipping Silvester, M.A., Fellow of Pembroke College, Oxford, and Lecturer of St. Bartholomew the Great, London, preached a sermon on regeneration before the university of Oxford, at St. Mary's, on February 26, which, without mentioning the names of the Methodist leaders, was evidently meant to be an antidote to one of their distinguished doctrines. The sermon was published, 8vo, twenty-eight pages, and on the title page was "recommended to the religious societies." The chief point in the sermon is that infants are born again in baptism.

Another sermon, on "The Doctrine of Assurance," was delivered on August 13, in the church of St. Lawrence Jewry, by the Rev. Arthur Bedford, M.A., chaplain to his royal highness Frederick Prince of Wales. This also, with an appendix, was published, 8vo, thirty-nine pages, and had an extensive circulation. It was avowedly intended to refute the doctrine of "those who had of late asserted that they who are not assured of their salvation, by a revelation from the Holy Ghost, are in a state of damnation." The preacher argues that this assurance "is given to very few, and perhaps only to such whom God calls either to extraordinary services, or to extraordinary sufferings." He further argues that to profess to have received such an assurance savours of spiritual pride, and cannot but produce bad results.

These were the first sermons published against the doctrines of Methodism, and both of them were extremely temperate when compared with others following.

At the end of the year 1738, Wesley drew up a set of rules for the regulation of the Moravian band societies, some of

[1] Warburton's Life, p. 523.

1738 Age 35 which were certainly more inquisitive than wise. Eleven questions, to be proposed to candidates for admission, were, upon the whole, unexceptionable; but five others, to be asked of every member at every weekly meeting, savour far too much of the popish confessional to be admired. We give them as an indication of the still unhealthy tone of Wesley's piety:—

"1. What known sins have you committed since our last meeting?

"2. What temptations have you met with?

"3. How were you delivered?

"4. What have you thought, said, or done, of which you doubt whether it be sin or not?

"5. Have you nothing you desire to keep secret?"[1]

No doubt, such questions were put with the best intentions; but the thing looked like a prurient prying into secrets which properly belong alone to a man and his Maker.

The whole of Wesley's publications, during 1738, have been already noticed, except "A Collection of Psalms and Hymns," eighty-four pages, 12mo. This small volume was published without the name of either printer or author; but it contains ample internal evidence of its origin. Its publication was contemplated immediately after Wesley's return from Georgia; and hence the following extract from a letter written by Dr. Byrom to Charles Wesley, on the 3rd of March, 1738.

"As your brother has brought so many hymns translated from the French, you will have a sufficient number, and no occasion to increase them by the small addition of Mademoiselle Bourignon's two little pieces. I desire you to favour my present weakness, if I judge wrong, and not to publish them.

"I do not at all desire to discourage your publication. But when you tell me you write, not for the critic, but for the Christian, it occurs to my mind that you might as well write for *both;* or in such a manner that the critic may, by your writing, be moved to turn Christian, rather than the Christian turn critic. I should be wanting, I fear, in speaking freely and friendly upon this matter, if I did not give it as my humble opinion that, before you publish, you might lay before some experienced Christian critics the design which you are upon. But I speak this with all submission. It is very likely that, in these matters, I may want a spur more than you want a bridle."[2]

[1] Rules of Band Societies, 4th edit., 1744.
[2] *Methodist Magazine*, 1863, p. 794.

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The book was probably intended for the use of the Moravian bands and other religious societies' meetings in London, with which Wesley was more or less connected. It contains seventy psalms and hymns; but it is a remarkable fact that not one of them seems to have been written by Wesley's brother Charles. One each is contributed by Addison, Dryden, and Lord Roscommon. One is from the Church liturgy, and one anonymous. Three are by Bishop Ken; four by Norris; six by Herbert; thirteen by Tate and Brady; thirty-three by Watts; and six are translations by Wesley himself. The book was never reprinted; but it formed the basis of another hymn-book, published three years after, in which exactly one-half of its psalms and hymns were embodied.[1] It was the first[2] of about forty hymnologies published by the two brothers during the next half-century, and which, as priceless gems, were scattered broadcast among the first Methodists.

With Wesley's first hymn-book we close the first section of his history.

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[1] See *Wesleyan Times*, Dec. 2, 1861.

[2] Since writing the above, we have met with one of Wesley's letters in Rawlinson's Continuation of Wood's "Athenæ Oxoniensis," in which he states that he published "A Collection of Psalms and Hymns," in 1736. Is this date an error?

PART II.

1739.

LONDON in 1739 was widely different from what it is at present. The population, including Westminster and all the parishes within the Bills of Mortality, was about 600,000, or a fifth of the population now. London Bridge was the only highway across the majestic Thames that the Londoners possessed; and that was covered with antique houses, from end to end, forming a sort of picturesque extension of Grace-church Street, from the Middlesex to the Surrey shore,—a narrow, darksome, and dangerous thoroughfare with an arched gateway at each end of it, generally bristling with spikes, and often adorned with the heads of traitors. The site of the present Mansion House was a fruit market, having on one side of it a row of shady trees and on the other a conduit, surmounted by an equestrian statue of King Charles II. Islington, Hoxton, Hackney, and Bethnal Green were country villages. On the Surrey side, all beyond the King's Bench prison was fields and open country. The Elephant and Castle stands where the small hamlet of Newington then stood. Walworth, Camberwell, Brixton, Peckham, and Clapham were rural haunts, far from the hum and noise of the great city. Even Lambeth was a vast conglomerated garden, extending from Kennington Common to what is now Westminster Bridge. Eastward—Blackwall, Poplar, Bow, and Stepney were somewhat distant collections of scattered houses, surrounded respectively by fields and gardens. Westward—Chelsea, Knightsbridge, Marylebone, and Tottenham Court were all in open country. Even Belgravia was a farm of arable and pasture land; while all the space, between Westminster and what is now Vauxhall Bridge, was a dreary tract of stunted, dusty, trodden grass, the resort of badger-

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1739 Age 36 baiters and other rampant blackguards, and known by the name of Tothill Fields.

Moorfields, the scene of Wesley's earliest evangelistic labours, and where he opened his Foundery meeting-house, was what would now-a-days be called a park, laid out in grass plots, intersected by broad gravel walks, and the favourite resort of citizens seeking exercise and recreation. Beneath a row of well grown elms was what the promenaders designated "the city mall," and which in the smartness of its company often rivalled the mall of St. James's Park. Here might be seen wives and daughters flaunting in all their finery and displaying their charms to city maccaronis, whose hats were cocked diagonally, and who gave themselves quite as many airs as the aristocratic coxcombs in the royal grounds. Under the trees were booths, whose fans, toys, trinkets, and confectionery found ready purchasers; while on the grass plots were erected mountebank diversions for the amusement of the people.

What a contrast between London then and London now! And yet, even then, London was thought to be dangerously too large. An able writer, in one of the magazines for 1762, argued that great cities are perilous to a nation's welfare; and in proof quoted Nineveh, Babylon, Persepolis, Tyre, Carthage, Rome, Athens, Memphis, Baalbec, Palmyra, Thebes, Jerusalem, etc. He contended that it was pernicious policy to suffer the eighth part of an entire nation to live in one crowded town; for when so many myriads lived on ground which produced nothing they were under the necessity of living by their wits—that is, by sharping and over-reaching, and by inventing idle and vicious amusements. Hence it was that in London there was such a multiplication of play-houses, operas, ridottos, and masquerades; and that almost one-half of some of the London parishes was converted into brothels by bawds and pimps. The anonymous alarmist was doubtless treated with contempt, but his theory deserves attention.

London was great, but it was wicked. And no wonder. Riches in the case of nations, as in the case of individuals, often lead to extravagance and luxury. Thus it was in England, in the reign of the second George. Superb edifices

rose up on every hand, almost vieing with the palaces of princes. Carriages, glittering with gold and crystal, rattled over city pavements with the utmost ostentation. Ridottos, balls, masquerades, and midnight banquets, were of constant occurrence. Every night innumerable lamps illuminated public gardens, where hosts of fashionable and licentious fops might be seen lolling in gilded alcoves, killing time, and lulling their senses into an indolent oblivion. Arrayed in masks and the strangest dresses, gamblers, actors, and prostitutes mingled with persons of riches and of rank, and, amid the din of music and of dancing, conversed obscene discourse, and whispered indecent slanders. All classes caught the contagion, and even the tables of shopkeepers and mechanics were covered with costly dainties. Clerks and apprentices, servant-maids and cooks, decked themselves in apparel equal to that of their masters and mistresses; and finical sparks deemed it their privilege and right to frequent taverns, clubs, and theatres, adorned with the finest clothes, perukes, and jewellery. 1739 Age 36

What resulted from all this? Extravagance created greater wants than the people had means to meet. Patrimonial estates, and the gains of honest business were not enough to satisfy newly engendered appetites; and hence men appealed to an infernal sorceress, to correct, forsooth, the errors made in distributing the gifts of Providence. To eke out means which were found too scanty to gratify licentious and luxurious passions, robbery was made polite, and gambling an every day duty. Idleness threw the dice, and Folly built them into castles; Avarice clutched at gold, but Fraud, with a sly and quick conveyance, snatched it from his hand. Even ladies laid wagers at home, while their lords gambled abroad; and dice began to rattle on the costermonger's barrow as well as upon the hazard tables of the noble and the rich. Money was looked upon as omnipotent; and the more men got the more they wanted, and especially when it was spent upon their own indulgences. An avaricious, mercenary spirit became general, and chiefly for the sake of vain display and sensual pleasures.

Poverty treads in the footsteps of extravagance. There were more equipages kept, and yet more taxes for the poor

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imposed; more diversions, and yet more want; more ladies of taste, and yet fewer housewives; more pomp, and yet less hospitality; more expense, and yet less frugality. In 1744, the grand jury of the county of Middlesex made a presentment to the effect, that "the advertisements in the newspapers were seducing the people to places for the encouragement of luxury, extravagance, and idleness; and that, by this means, families were ruined, and the kingdom dishonoured; and that, unless some superior authority put a stop to such riotous living, they feared it would lead to the destruction of the nation."

The town abounded with men who regarded honour, honesty, and virtue as the merest phantoms;—men with whom promises were not binding, obligations were nullities, and impudence a duty;—dastards who might slander their neighbours, ridicule their superiors, be saucy to their equals, insolent to their inferiors, and abusive to all; to-day spaniels, to-morrow bullies, and at all times cowards; to whom learning was a burden, and books were baubles; vice being their delight, and virtue their aversion; demons in disguise, all order and symmetry without, and yet all rancour and rottenness within.

The country was an apt imitator of the vices of the town. There the squire, having, by idleness and bad company, forgotten the little learning he acquired at college, too often devoted himself to drinking and debauchery; while the common people were ignorant, superstitious, brutal, and bad behaved. Workmen entered into combinations to extort higher wages than their labour merited, or than their masters could afford; and even parliament had to pass enactments limiting the salaries of tailors. Smuggling was enormous; and, in 1744, it was calculated that, in the county of Suffolk only, not fewer than 4,500 horses were employed in carrying merchandise of a contraband character.

This dark picture might easily be enlarged, not from posterior writings, or even from the religious publications of the period, but from periodicals, magazines, and newspapers, which had no temptation to represent the customs, manners, usages, and vices of the age in a worse aspect than was warranted by facts. Wesley, as will be seen hereafter, used strong and startling language; but there is nothing in Wesley's

writings which exceeds the hideous delineations found in the popular literature published contemporaneously by other impartial and mere worldly writers, who are above suspicion. The *Weekly Miscellany* for 1732 broadly asserts that the people were engulfed in voluptuousness and business; and that a zeal for godliness looked as odd upon a man as would the antiquated dress of his great grandfather. It states that freethinkers were formed into clubs, to propagate their tenets, and to make the nation a race of profligates; and that atheism was scattered broadcast throughout the kingdom. It affirms that it was publicly avowed that vice was profitable to the state; that the country would be benefited by the establishment of public stews; and that polygamy, concubinage, and even sodomy were not sinful. 1739 Age 36

In many respects the reign of the second George bore a striking resemblance to the present day. There was unexampled wealth, followed by luxury, display, dissipation, gambling, irreligion, and wickedness. The pastoral letters of Bishop Gibson, published at this period, show that most pernicious efforts were put forth to undermine religion, and to make men infidels. One class of writers laboured to set aside all Christian ordinances, the Christian ministry, and a Christian church. Another so allegorized the meaning of the miracles of Christ, as to take away their reality. Others displayed the utmost zeal for natural religion in opposition to revealed; and all, or most, under the pretence of pleading for the liberties of men, ran into the wildest licentiousness. Reason was recommended as a full and sufficient guide in matters of religion, and the Scriptures were to be believed only as they agreed or disagreed with the light of nature.

The same causes give birth to the same effects. Things reproduce themselves. The words of Solomon are as truthful now as when he wrote them: "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun."

By reviving religion, Methodism saved the nation more than a hundred years ago; and now that the nation presents the same aspect, to a great extent, as it presented then, and is threatened with the same disasters, is it not certain that nothing but an agency analogous to the Methodism then

1739 raised up will be found sufficient to check the progress of
Age 36 antiquated errors now revived; to stem the aboundings of licentiousness; and to make men feel that wealth is given, not to be spent in display and luxury, but in honouring God, and in promoting the happiness of the human race?

The revival of religion, which occurred about the time when Methodism commenced its marvellous career, was a world-wide one.

The Moravian movement in Germany has been already noticed.

In America, the work began in 1729, the very year in which the Oxford Methodists formed their first society. The Rev. Jonathan Edwards fanned the fire into a holy flame by preaching the grand old doctrine of "justification by faith alone." In the town of Northampton, New England, containing two hundred families, there was scarcely a single person at the beginning of the year 1735 who was not deeply convinced of sin, and earnestly seeking salvation; and from day to day, for months, there were undeniable instances of genuine conversion. Almost every house was a house of prayer, and, in all companies, Christ was the theme of public conversation. The revival which commenced at Northampton spread throughout the greater part of the colony. All sorts of people,—high and low, rich and poor, wise and unwise, moral and immoral,—simultaneously became the subjects of the Spirit's strivings, and were converted. This remarkable movement took place only a few months before Wesley set sail for Georgia, and continued for several years afterwards. Mr. Edwards published a narrative of its most striking incidents; and also his "Thoughts" as to "the way in which it ought to be acknowledged and promoted;" and from these two invaluable treatises we collect the following facts.

In many instances, conviction of sin and conversion were attended with intense physical excitement. Numbers fell prostrate on the ground, and cried aloud for mercy. The bodies of others were convulsed and benumbed. As chaos preceded creation, so in New England confusion went before conversion. The work was great and glorious, but was accompanied with noise and tumult. Men literally *cried* for mercy; but the loudest outcries were not so loud as the shrieks of

Voltaire or Volney, when the prospect of eternity unmanned them. Stout-hearted sinners trembled; but not more than philosophers at the present day would do, if they had equally vivid views of the torments of the damned to which sin exposes them. There were groanings and faintings; transports and ecstasies; zeal sometimes more fervid than discreet; and passion not unfrequently more powerful than pious; but, from one end of the land to the other, multitudes of vain thoughtless sinners were unmistakably converted, and were made new creatures in Christ Jesus. Frolicking, night walking, singing lewd songs, tavern haunting, profane speaking, and extravagance in dress, were generally abandoned. The talk of the people was about the favour of God, an interest in Christ, a sanctified heart, and spiritual blessedness here and hereafter. The country was full of meetings of persons of all sorts and ages to read, pray, and sing praises. Oftentimes the people were wrought up into the highest transports of love, joy, and admiration, and had such views of the Divine perfections, and the excellencies of Christ, that, for five or six hours together, their souls reposed in a kind of sacred elysium, until the body seemed to sink beneath the weight of Divine discoveries, and nature was deprived of all ability to stand or speak. Connected with all this, there were no enthusiastic impulses, or supposed revelations, but trembling reverence, the mildest meekness, and warmest charity. To use Edwards' own language, "The New Jerusalem, in this respect, had begun to come down from heaven, and perhaps never were more of the prelibations of heaven's glory given upon earth."

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Of course there were men who opposed and maligned this blessed work of God's Holy Spirit; or, at all events, did their utmost to discredit it by exposing, as they thought, the infirmities of those who were the chief agents used in promoting it. Ministers were blamed for their earnestness in voice and gesture, and for addressing themselves rather to the passions of their hearers than their reason. Others were censured for preaching the terrors of the law too frequently, and for frightening the people with hell-fire discourses. Objections were raised against so much time being spent in religious meetings; though the objectors had been significantly silent when the selfsame persons had formerly spent

1739 Age 36 quite as much time, and even more, in taverns, and in sinful pleasures. Some were disgusted at the new converts so passionately warning, inviting, and entreating others to be saved. Some found fault with so much singing, forgetting that singing is one of the great employments of the beatified in heaven; and others found equal fault with children being allowed to meet together to read and pray, thus, unintentionally perhaps, resembling the priests and scribes, who were sore displeased when the children saluted Christ by shouting "Hosannah in the highest!" Thus did men mutter discontent when they ought to have sung praises; and not a few fell into the sin of those in olden times, who said concerning Christ, "He casteth out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils."

At the very time that this marvellous religious revival broke out in America, a similar work was begun in Wales. Howel Harris was born at Trevecca in 1714, and, a few months before the Wesleys went to Georgia, found the forgiveness of sins, and was made unutterably happy by a Divine assurance of his adoption into the family of God. The Wesleys, however, had no acquaintance with him, nor he with them. While they were on the ocean he left his home in Wales, and entered the university from which they had so recently departed; but here he was so distressed with collegiate immoralities, that, after keeping but a single term, he returned to his native hills, and, without orders, began at once to preach the salvation which he himself experienced. It is a curious fact, not generally noticed, that the first lay preacher in the great Methodist movement, was Howel Harris. He commenced preaching in Wales just when the Wesleys and Ingham commenced in Georgia; and, before Wesley reached Bristol in 1739, had been the means of a most glorious work being wrought in the neighbouring principality. Up to this period the morals of the Welsh were deplorably corrupt; and in this respect there was no difference between rich and poor, ministers and people; gluttony, drunkenness, and licentiousness were general. In the pulpits of parish churches the name of Christ was hardly ever uttered; and, in 1736, there were only six Dissenting chapels throughout the whole of northern Wales.

Harris first commenced visiting from house to house in his own native parish, and in neighbouring ones. Then the people flocked together, and, almost without knowing it, he began to preach. The magistrates and clergy threatened him; but their threats failed to silence him. For a maintenance, he set up a school, and meantime continued preaching. Numbers were convinced of sin, and these the young preacher, only twenty-two years of age, formed into small societies analogous to those of which he had read in Dr. Woodward's History. At the end of 1737, persecuting malice ejected him from his school; but, as in other instances so in this, it overshot its mark; for this, instead of silencing the preacher, made him preach more than ever. He now gave himself entirely to the work of an evangelist, and henceforth generally delivered three or four, and sometimes five or six, sermons every day to crowded congregations. A widespread reformation followed. Public diversions became unfashionable, and religion became the theme of common conversation. A few began to help him, of whom the venerable Rev. Griffith Jones was the most prominent. In 1737, this devoted clergyman instituted his movable free schools; and a letter published in the *Glasgow Weekly History*, of 1742, describes him as "one of the most excellent preachers in Great Britain." Not a few of the teachers in his peripatetic schools became Methodist preachers; and certainly their travels as instructors, as well as his own preaching tours, prepared the way for the Methodist itinerant ministry. 1739 Age 36

Thus was Howel Harris an itinerant preacher at least a year and a half before Whitefield and Wesley were; and, as the brave-hearted herald of hundreds more who were to follow after him, he met the fiercest persecutions with an undaunted soul and an unflinching face. Parsons and country squires menaced him, and mobs swore and flung stones and sticks at him; but he calmly pursued his way, labouring almost alone in his own isolated sphere until he met with Whitefield in the town of Cardiff, in 1739. Whitefield says he found him "a burning and shining light; a barrier against profanity and immorality; and an indefatigable promoter of the gospel of Christ. During the last three years, he had preached almost twice every day, for three or four hours

1739 Age 36 together; and, in his evangelistic tours, had visited seven counties, and had established nearly thirty societies; and still his sphere of action was enlarging daily."

Almost contemporaneous with this marvellous work across the Atlantic and in Wales, was another across the Tweed, in Scotland. The facts following are taken from "A Faithful Narrative, written by James Robe, A.M., Minister of the Gospel at Kilsyth," and printed in 1742.

For years past, there had been a sensible decay in the life and power of godliness in Scotland; but, in 1740, Mr. Robe began to preach upon the doctrine of regeneration. Meanwhile, a glorious revival of the work of God occurred at Cambuslang; and, on April 25, 1741, at Kilsyth. Sixteen children began to hold prayer-meetings in the town of Kirkintilloch, and the godly excitement became general. On every hand were heard cries, groans, and the voice of weeping. On the 16th of May, above thirty persons were awakened under the ministry of Mr. Robe, and, in a short time after, hundreds were converted in the country round about. Drunkenness, and swearing, and other flagrant sins were instantly abandoned; family worship was set up; meetings for prayer were established; and the people generally flocked to the house of God. Young converts held prayer-meetings in fields, barns, schoolhouses, and the manses of their ministers. Cambuslang, Kilsyth, Campsie, Kirkintilloch, Auchinloch, St. Ninians, Gargunnock, Calder, Badernock, Irvine, Long Dreghorn, Kilmarnock, Larbert, Dundee, Bothwell, Muthill, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and other towns, villages, and parishes were visited with a most gracious outpouring of God's Holy Spirit; and scenes of mercy were witnessed quite as striking as those which were occurring simultaneously both in England and America. Not a few of the converts, about one sixth of the whole, suffered such distress of mind, and were under such powerful religious influence, that they not only cried and shrieked aloud, but trembled, fainted, and were convulsed in their bodies most mysteriously—exhibiting the same physical affections as the converts in New England; and this evoked considerable opposition, and led the Associate Presbytery at Dunfermline, to pronounce the movement a "delusion, and the work of the grand deceiver." Some were

seized with such trembling that their friends had to render them support. Many of the females went into hysterics. Numbers, on finding peace, broke forth into rapturous weeping, and had their countenances so lit up with serenity and brightness, that their neighbours declared they had obtained not only new hearts, but new faces. A few, but not many, professed to have visions of hell, of heaven, of the devil, and of Jesus. 1739 Age 36

The writer gives these facts as he finds them. Mr. Robe, in his narrative, extending over hundreds of pages, endeavours to show that such effects were not without precedents, and quotes a great number of similar instances which had occurred, in different places, from the time of the Reformation downwards. It is no part of our purpose either to explain, justify, or condemn them. We shall shortly find the same kind of effects following the preaching of Wesley in England. At present, the reader is merely reminded of the wondrous and glorious fact, that the great Methodist revival of religion, begun in 1739, stood not alone; for God, in His sovereign mercy, was working works quite as great in Germany, America, and Scotland. The revival in Germany gave birth to the heroic, martyr-like Moravian church. That in America greatly prepared the way for Whitefield, and for the first Methodist missionaries to that huge continent. That in Scotland revived the almost expiring piety of the kirk across the border; and, doubtless, greatly contributed to the devout and increasing energy and zeal evinced by the different churches there from that day to this. And that in Wales has issued in results equally remarkable. God the Spirit is omnipresent, and can give a universal revival of truth and godliness as easily as a local one. It is, also, a significant fact, of vast importance, that the whole of these great revivals were begun by preaching the same kind of truth. Christian David, the carpenter, begun the work in Moravia by preaching the doctrine of salvation by simple faith in Christ; and so did Jonathan Edwards in America. The revival at Kilsyth sprang out of Mr. Robe's sermons on regeneration; and no one need be told that these were the doctrines which formed the staple of Wesley's and Whitefield's sermons in Great Britain. This is the truth pre-eminently needed by

1739 Age 36 man, in all ages, and in all lands; and this is the truth which, wherever preached, is always honoured, by being made the means of man's salvation.

At the close of the year 1738, Wesley was almost uniformly excluded from the pulpits of the Established Church. During the whole of 1739, the only churches in which he was allowed to preach, were Basingshaw, Islington, St. Giles', and St. Katherine's churches, London; and the churches at Dummer, Clifton, Runwick, and St. Mary's in Exeter. The first two months of the year were spent in the metropolis; but with the exception of expounding in a few private houses, Wesley had to content himself with preaching not more than half-a-dozen sermons. In the month of March, he set out for Oxford, and wrote the following hitherto unpublished letter to his friend Whitefield. The letter is long, but full of interest.

"*March* 16, 1739.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—On Thursday, the 8th instant, we breakfasted at Mr. Score's, Oxford, who is patiently waiting for the salvation of God. Thence we went to Mrs. Campton's, who has set her face as a flint. After we had spent some time in prayer, Mr. Washington came with Mr. Gibbs, and read several passages out of Bishop Patrick's Parable of the Pilgrim, to prove that we were all under a delusion, and that we were to be justified by faith and works. Charles Metcalfe withstood him to the face. After they were gone, we again besought our Lord that He would maintain His own cause. Meanwhile, Mr. Washington and Mr. Watson were going about to all parts, and confirming the unfaithful; and at seven, when I designed to expound at Mrs. Campton's, Mr. Washington was got there before me, and was beginning to read Bishop Bull against the witness of the Spirit. He told me he was authorized by the minister of the parish to do this. I advised all who valued their souls to depart; and, perceiving it to be the less evil of the two, that they who remained might not be perverted, I entered directly into the controversy, touching both the cause and fruits of justification. In the midst of the dispute, James Mears's wife began to be in pain. I prayed with her when Mr. Washington was gone; and then we went down to sister Thomas's. In the way, Mrs. Mears's agony so increased, that she could not avoid crying out aloud in the street. With much difficulty, we got her to Mrs. Shrieve's, where God heard us, and sent her deliverance, and where her husband also was set at liberty soon after. Presently Mrs. Shrieve fell into a strange agony both of body and mind; her teeth gnashed together; her knees smote each other; and her whole body trembled exceedingly. We prayed on; and, within an hour, the storm ceased; and she now enjoys a sweet calm, having remission of sins, and knowing that her Redeemer liveth.

"At my return to Mrs. Fox's, I found our dear brother Kinchin just come from Dummer. We rejoiced, and gave thanks, and prayed, and took sweet counsel together; the result of which was, that instead of setting out for London, as I designed, on Friday morning, I set out for Dummer, there being no person to supply the church on Sunday. At Reading I found a young man, Cennick by name, strong in the faith of our Lord Jesus. He had begun a society there the week before; but the minister of the parish had now well-nigh overturned it. Several of the members of it spent the evening with us, and it pleased God to strengthen and comfort them. 1739 Age 36

"On Saturday morning, our brother Cennick rode with me, whom I found willing to suffer, yea, to die for his Lord. We came to Dummer in the afternoon: Miss Molly was weak in body, but strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Surely her light ought not thus to be hid under a bushel. She has forgiveness, but not the witness of the Spirit; perhaps because our dear brother Kinchin seems to think them inseparable.

"On Sunday morning we had a large and attentive congregation. In the evening, the room at Basingstoke was full, and my mouth was opened. We expected much opposition, but had none at all.

"On Monday, Mrs. Cleminger being in pain and fear, we prayed, and her Lord gave her peace. About noon we spent an hour or two in conference and prayer with Miss Molly; and then set out in a glorious storm; but I had a calm within. We had appointed the little society at Reading to meet us in the evening; but the enemy was too vigilant. Almost as soon as we were out of the town, the minister sent, or went, to each of the members, and began arguing and threatening, and utterly confounded them, so that they were all scattered abroad. Mr. Cennick's own sister did not dare to see us, but was gone out on purpose to avoid it.

"On Tuesday I came to Oxford again, and from Mrs. Fox's went to Mrs. Campton's. I found the minister of the parish had been there before me, to whom she had plainly declared, that she had never had a true faith in Christ till a week ago. After some warm and sharp expressions, he told her he must repel her from the holy communion. Finding she was not convinced, even by that argument, he left her calmly rejoicing in God her Saviour.

"At six in the evening, we were at Mrs. Fox's society; about seven at Mrs. Campton's: the power of the Lord was present at both, and all our hearts were knit together in love.

"The next day we had an opportunity to confirm most, if not all, the souls which had been shaken. In the afternoon, I preached at the Castle. We afterwards joined together in prayer, having now Charles Graves added to us, who is rooted and grounded in the faith. We then went to Mr. Gibbs's room, where were Mr. Washington and Mr. Watson. Here an hour was spent in conference and prayer, but without any disputing. At four in the morning I left Oxford. God hath indeed planted and watered: O may He give the increase.

"I am, etc.,

"JOHN WESLEY."

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Thus did the expelled minister employ his time and energies. The churches were shut against him; but he found work in cottages. Half-a-dozen sermons in church pulpits in three months! No wonder that Wesley escaped to Bristol. Silence to such a man was intolerable. Priests and their parasites had gagged him in the metropolis, and he now started for a new sphere of labour.

His friend Whitefield, during the first five weeks of the year, was more fortunate, and managed to preach about thirty sermons in consecrated edifices in and about London. How long this permission might have lasted, it is difficult to determine; but, at the beginning of February, Whitefield, like a flaming seraph, set off to Bath and Bristol. Perhaps his departure thither was hastened by a fracas which occurred only three days before at St. Margaret's, Westminster, where he yielded to the pressure of the crowd, and preached, despite the opposition of the minister and his church officers.[1] Be that as it may, the news of the disturbance, published in the *Weekly Miscellany*, got to the west of England before him; and, on his arrival, all the churches were closed against him. In a few days, however, Mr. Penrose granted him the pulpit of St. Werburgh's; and Mr. Gibbs the pulpit of St. Mary Redcliff. The chancellor of Bristol interfered, and threatened that, if he continued to preach or expound in the diocese without licence, he should first be suspended and then expelled. This was the turning point. To muzzle Whitefield

[1] The *Weekly Miscellany* for February 10, 1739, and in subsequent numbers, states that there was considerable chicanery practised in securing Whitefield the pulpit of St. Margaret's. It was pretended that a friendly society desired him to preach for the benefit of their funds; but the treasurer of the society, and four of its six trustees, signed and published a document contradicting this assertion. Of the two remaining, one was from home at the time, and the other was a Mr. Bennett, who assisted the crowd in pushing Whitefield into the pulpit. There can be little doubt that Whitefield was deceived by Bennett, and that it was a mistake for him to preach at St. Margaret's when he did. In the same weekly journal, it is asserted that Charles Wesley had been guilty of the same illegal act, by taking possession of the pulpit at Bloomsbury. His friends asked the pulpit for him; the request was refused; and yet he came into the preacher's pew; sat next the door; and, as soon as prayers were over, went into the pulpit and preached, to the great surprise of the clergyman, who intended to preach himself. We have no means of either confirming or refuting this.

was impossible; and hence, being shut out of the Bristol churches, away he went, on February 17, and preached, in the open air, to two hundred colliers at Kingswood. This was the boldest step that any of the Methodists had yet taken; and perhaps none of them but the impulsive, large-hearted Whitefield would have had sufficient courage to be the first in such a shocking departure from Church rules and usages. The Rubicon was passed. A clergyman had dared to be so irregular as to preach in the open air, and God had sanctioned the irregularity by making it a blessing. At the second Kingswood service, Whitefield says he had two thousand people to hear him; and at the third, four thousand; while, at the fifth service, the four thousand were increased to ten. These were marvellous crowds to assemble out of doors in the bleak months of February and March. No wonder that Whitefield's soul took fire. He declares he never preached with greater power than now. One day, he would take his stand on Hannam Mount; another, on Rose Green; and another at the Fishponds. Then he ran off to Cardiff, and preached in the town hall; and then to Bath, and preached on the town common. Then we find him preaching to about four thousand at Baptist Mills; and, on March 18, his congregation at Rose Green was estimated at not less than twenty thousand, to whom he preached nearly an hour and a half.[1] A gentleman lent him a large bowling-green in the heart of Bristol, and here he preached to seven or eight thousand people. In the village of Publow, several thousands assembled to hear him; and, at Coal-pit Heath and other places, the crowds were quite as great. All this transpired within six weeks, and, at nearly all these strange and enormous gatherings, Whitefield made a collection for his orphan house in Georgia. His soul expanded with his marvellous success. He wished to try the same experiment elsewhere; and hence he sent for Wesley to act as his Bristol and Kingswood successor. Wesley arrived at Bristol on Saturday, March 31; and, the next day, heard Whitefield at the Bowling-green, Rose Green,

1739 Æt. 3[illegible]

[1] His congregation, including horses and coaches, covered three acres (*Gentleman's Magazine*, 1739).

1739 Age 36 and Hannam Mount, and was thus introduced to the vast congregations which Whitefield bequeathed to his godly care. He was once again ungagged, and, during the nine months from March to December, preached and expounded almost without ceasing.

Whitefield, on leaving Wesley at Bristol, made his way to London, preaching to assembled thousands at Gloucester and other places. The churches in the metropolis were all closed against him; but Moorfields and Kennington Common were still open; and here, to congregations consisting of tens of thousands, he rapturously proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation. In one instance, he computed his Kennington congregation at fifty thousand, to whom he preached an hour and a half. Eighty coaches were present, besides great numbers of people on horseback. On another occasion, his collection for the orphan house in Georgia amounted to upwards of £47, of which £16 were in half-pence. At another time, the concourse in Moorfields numbered nearly sixty thousand; and, at every service, he seems to have made collections for Georgia, himself acting as one of the collectors. He then made a short preaching excursion to Hertford, Northampton, and Bedford, where the stairs of a windmill served him for a pulpit. On returning to town, he received letters from Scotland, telling him that Ralph Erskine had turned field preacher, and had had a congregation of fourteen thousand people. In June, Wesley came to London to see him, and preached at Blackheath to twelve or fourteen thousand people, "the Lord giving him," writes Whitefield, "ten thousand times more success than He has given me." An embargo unexpectedly laid on shipping detained him in England a few weeks longer, during which he visited Hertfordshire, Essex, Gloucestershire, and other places. In July, he joined his friend Wesley in Bristol, and acknowledged that the congregations were much more serious and affected than when he had left them three months before. The Kingswood colliers, instead of cursing and swearing, now made the woods ring with their hymns of praise. At length, in the month of August, Whitefield set sail for America, where we must leave him until his return to England, in March, 1741.

Charles Wesley passed most of the year 1739 in London and its neighbourhood. His brother and his friends urged him to settle at Oxford; but he refused, without further direction from God. He preached in churches as long as he was permitted; and, when prohibited, followed the example of Whitefield and his brother. 1739 Age 36

For a moment, we must retrace our steps. As already stated, Wesley himself spent the first two months of 1739 in London. How was he occupied? On New Year's day, he was present at a remarkable lovefeast in Fetter Lane, which continued until three o'clock in the morning, and which consisted of himself, his brother, his clerical friends Whitefield, Ingham, Hall, Kinchin, and Hutchings, and about sixty Moravians. At the hour mentioned, the power of God came upon them so mightily, that many cried out for exceeding joy, others fell prostrate on the ground, and all joined in singing, "We praise Thee, O God; we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord." But even this marvellous manifestation of the majesty of God failed to remove Wesley's doubts and fears; for, three days afterwards, we find him writing the bitterest things against himself, and concluding with the words, "Though I have constantly used all the means of grace for twenty years, I am not a Christian."

The day after, January 5, seven of the despised Methodist clergymen (probably the seven just mentioned), held a conference at Islington, on several matters of great importance, and, after prayer and fasting, determined what they were in doubt about, by casting lots. "We parted," says Whitefield, "with a full conviction that God was going to do great things among us;"[1] a conviction which was soon verified.

On January 7, they held another lovefeast at Fetter Lane, and spent the whole night in prayer and thanksgiving.[2]

January 25, Wesley baptized five adults at Islington, and makes a strange distinction, which shows that his views of the scriptural doctrine of salvation were still hazy and confused. He writes: "Of the adults I have known baptized lately, only

[1] Whitefield's Journal. [2] Ibid.

1739 Age 36 one was at that time born again, in the full sense of the word; that is, found a thorough inward change by the love of God filling her heart. Most of them were only born again in a lower sense; that is, received the remission of their sins." Let the reader compare this with a passage in Wesley's sermon on "The Great Privilege of those that are Born of God," and he will mark the difference.

"It has been frequently supposed, that the being born of God was all one with the being justified; that the new birth and justification were only different expressions, denoting the same thing: it being certain, on the one hand, that whoever is justified is also born of God; and on the other, that whoever is born of God is also justified; yea, that both these gifts of God are given to every believer in one and the same moment. In one point of time his sins are blotted out, and he is born again of God. But though it be allowed, that justification and the new birth are, in point of time, inseparable from each other, yet are they easily distinguished, as being not the same, but things of a widely different nature. Justification implies only a relative, the new birth a real, change. God in justifying us does something *for* us; in begetting us again, He does the work *in* us. The one restores us to the favour, the other to the image, of God. The one is the taking away the guilt, the other the taking away the power, of sin; so that, although they are joined together in point of time, yet they are of wholly distinct natures."

Nothing can be more scriptural, or more clearly expressed than this; but comparison with the extract from his journal, above given, shows that, even in 1739, Wesley was far from being "a scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven." He still had much both to learn and to unlearn; but it was a happy fact, that he was docile and eager to be taught. Four days after baptizing the adults at Islington, he sat up till near one in the morning with Whitefield and two other clergymen, earnestly listening to a midnight discussion concerning the doctrine of the new birth.[1]

During the month of February, he had three separate interviews with bishops of the Established Church. On the 6th, he went with Whitefield to the Bishop of Gloucester, to solicit a subscription for Georgia.[2] On the 21st, he and his brother Charles waited on Potter, Archbishop of Canterbury, who showed them great affection;

[1] Whitefield's Journal. [2] Ibid.

spoke mildly of Whitefield; cautioned them to give no more umbrage than necessary; to forbear exceptionable phrases; and to keep to the doctrines of the Church. They told him they expected persecution; but would abide by the Church till her articles and homilies were repealed. From Potter, they proceeded direct to Gibson, Bishop of London, who denied that he had condemned them, or even heard much about them. Whitefield's Journal, he said, was tainted with enthusiasm, though Whitefield himself was a pious, well meaning youth. He warned them against Antinomianism, and dismissed them kindly.[1] 1739 Age 36

On the day after their interview with the Bishop of Gloucester, Whitefield, shut out of the London churches, set off on his tour to Bristol. Three weeks later, Wesley wrote him an account of his proceedings in London.

"*February* 26, 1739.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—Our Lord's hand is not shortened amongst us. Yesterday I preached at St. Katherine's, and at Islington, where the church was almost as hot as some of the society rooms used to be.[2] The fields, after service, were white with people praising God. About three hundred were present at Mr. S——'s; thence I went to Mr. Bray's; thence to Fetter Lane; and, at nine, to Mr. B——'s, where also we wanted room. To-day I expound in the Minories at four; at Mrs. W——'s at six; and in Gravel Lane, Bishopsgate, at eight. On Wednesday, at six, we have a noble company of women, not adorned with gold or costly apparel, but with a meek and quiet spirit. At the Savoy, on Thursday evening, we have usually two or three hundred, most of them, at least, thoroughly awakened. On Friday, Mr. A——'s parlour is more than filled; as is Mr. P——'s room twice over."[3]

This extract will give the reader an idea of Wesley's weekly labours in London, up to the time that he set out for Bristol. Every day had its day's work. It was impossible for such a

[1] C. Wesley's Journal.

[2] This is worth noting. Wesley, in his History of England, vol. iv., p. 188, tells us that "a severe frost began at Christmas, and continued till the latter end of February. The Thames was covered with such a crust of ice that a multitude of people dwelled upon it in tents, and a great number of booths were erected for the entertainment of the populace. The navigation was entirely stopped; the fruits of the earth were destroyed; many persons were chilled to death; the price of all sorts of provisions rose almost to a dearth; and even water was sold in the streets of London."

[3] Whitefield's Journal.

1739 Age 36 man to be idle: work was essential to his happiness, and almost to his existence.

Already the people began to have faith in the power of his piety and prayers. The parents of a lunatic besought his intercessions on behalf of their afflicted son, who, for five years past, had been in the habit of beating and tearing himself, putting his hands into the fire, and thrusting pins into his flesh. Wesley and his friends yielded to the request on February 17; and, from that time, the poor creature, though not fully freed from his calamitous affliction, had more rest than he had had for two years before. On the same day, a middle aged, well dressed woman, at a society-meeting in Beech Lane, was seized as with the agonies of death. For three years, her friends had accounted her mad, and had bled and blistered her accordingly. Wesley prayed with her, and, five days after, she was victoriously delivered, and in a moment was filled with love and joy.[1] Within a fortnight, a third instance, somewhat similar, took place at Oxford, whither Wesley had gone for a brief visit. Hearing of a woman who was most violently opposed to the Methodist revival, he went to her and argued with her. This enraged her more and more. Wesley broke off the dispute, and began to pray. In a few minutes, the woman fell into an extreme agony, both of body and soul; and soon after cried out with the utmost earnestness, "Now I know I am forgiven for Christ's sake;" and, from that hour, set her face as a flint to declare the faith which before she persecuted.

We have already seen that, at the beginning of the month of March, Wesley made a tour to Oxford, and while there wrote to Whitefield the long letter which has been already given. On his return to London, he received a most urgent request from Whitefield to proceed to Bristol without delay. Wesley hesitated; Charles objected; and the society at Fetter Lane disputed; but, at length, the matter was decided by casting lots. Wesley reached Bristol on March 31, and on April 2 Whitefield left, summing up the results of his first six weeks of out-door preaching thus: "Many sinners have

[1] Whitefield's Journal.

been effectually converted, and all the children of God have been exceedingly comforted. Several thousands of little books have been dispersed among the people; about £200 collected for the orphan house; and many poor families relieved by the bounty of my friend Mr. Seward. And what gives me the greater comfort is the consideration that my dear and honoured friend Mr. Wesley is left behind to confirm those that are awakened; so that I hope, when I return from Georgia, to see many bold soldiers of Jesus Christ."[1] 1739 Age 36

The next day he wrote to Wesley the following, which is now for the first time given to the public:—

"*April* 3, 1739.

"HONOURED SIR,—Yesterday I began to play the madman in Gloucestershire, by preaching on a table in Thornbury Street. To-day I have exhorted twice; and by-and-by shall begin a third time; nothing like doing good by the way. Be pleased to go to Kingswood, and forward the good work as much as possible. I desire you would open any letters that come directed for me, and send me a line to Gloucester. I wish you all the success imaginable in your ministry; and I pray God that my Bristol friends may grow in grace under it. Parting from them has struck a little damp upon my joy; but God will quickly revisit.

"Honoured sir, your unworthy loving servant,

"GEORGE WHITEFIELD.

"The Rev. Mr. John Wesley, at Mr. Grevil's,
"Wine Street, Bristol."

On the day of Whitefield's departure, at four in the afternoon, Wesley ventured to follow his friend's example, and for the first time in England dared to preach in the open air. His text was appropriate and striking, Isaiah lxi. 1, 2. The place was "a little eminence in a ground adjoining to the city." His feeling was deep. He says: "I could scarce reconcile myself at first to this strange way of preaching in the fields; having been all my life, till very lately, so tenacious of every point relating to decency and order, that I should have thought the saving of souls almost a sin if it had not been done in a church."

Such were the prejudices and the feelings of the man who, for between fifty and sixty years proved himself the greatest out-door preacher that ever lived.

[1] Whitefield's Journal.

1739 Age 36 With the exception of brief visits to London in June, September, and November, and of a short tour into Wales and another to Exeter, Wesley spent the whole of his time, from April to the end of 1739, in Bristol and its immediate neighbourhood. Though there are considerable gaps in Wesley's journal, during which we lose sight of his texts and sermons, it is not too much to say that he delivered at least five hundred discourses and expositions in the nine months of which we speak; and it is a noticeable fact that only eight of these were delivered in churches,—six in the church at Clifton, one at Runwick, and one at Exeter. His preaching plan was as follows:—an exposition to one or other of the Bristol societies every night, and preaching every Sunday morning, and every Monday and Saturday afternoon. At Kingswood, including Hannam Mount, Rose Green, and Two Mile Hill, he preached twice every sabbath, and also every alternate Tuesday and Friday. At Baptist Mills, he preached every Friday; at Bath, once a fortnight, on Tuesday; and at Pensford, once a fortnight, on Thursday.

Another point is worth noticing. His chief, almost his only aim, was to explain to the people the plan of scriptural salvation; for, as may easily be seen, almost all his texts have an immediate bearing on this the greatest of all pulpit topics. Saved himself, his whole soul was absorbed in a grand endeavour to expound the truth which, above all other truths, is the means of saving sinners. "The points," he writes, "I chiefly insisted upon were four: first, that orthodoxy, or right opinions, is, at best, but a very slender part of religion, if it can be allowed to be any part at all; that neither does religion consist in negatives, in bare harmlessness of any kind; nor merely in externals, in doing good, or using the means of grace, in works of piety, or of charity: that it is nothing short of, or different from, the mind that was in Christ; the image of God stamped upon the heart; inward righteousness, attended with the peace of God and joy in the Holy Ghost. Secondly, that the only way to this religion is repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Thirdly, that by this faith, he that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, is justified freely by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. And, lastly, that being

justified by faith, we taste of the heaven to which we are going; we are holy and happy; we tread down sin and fear, and sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus."[1] 1739 Age 36

He further tells us that the reasons which induced him to begin preaching in the open air were—1. That he was forbidden, as by a general consent, though not by any judicial sentence, to preach in any church. 2. That the rooms in which he preached could not contain a tenth part of the people that were earnest to hear. Hence, he adds, he determined to do in England what he had often done in a warmer climate; namely, when the house would not contain the congregation, to preach in the open air; and never had he seen a more awful sight than when, on Rose Green, or the top of Hannam Mount, some thousands of people were calmly joined together in solemn waiting upon God. He had no desire or design to preach in the open air till he was forbidden to preach in churches. It was no matter of choice, neither of premeditation. Field preaching was a sudden expedient, a thing submitted to rather than chosen; and submitted to, because he thought preaching even thus better than not preaching at all; first, in regard to his own soul, because a dispensation of the gospel being committed to him, he did not dare not to preach the gospel; and secondly, in regard to the souls of others, whom he everywhere saw seeking death in the error of their life.[2]

Some of his friends urged him to settle in college, or to accept a cure of souls: to whom he replied:—

"I have no business at college, having now no office and no pupils; and it will be time enough to consider whether I ought to accept a cure of souls when one is offered to me. On scriptural grounds, I do not think it hard to justify what I am doing. God, in Scripture, commands me, according to my power, to instruct the ignorant, reform the wicked, confirm the virtuous. Man forbids me to do this in another's parish; that is, in effect, not to do it at all, seeing I have now no parish of my own, nor probably ever shall. Whom then shall I hear? God or man? If it be just to obey man rather than God, judge ye. I look upon all the world as my parish; thus far I mean, that, in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty to declare unto all that are willing to hear, the glad tidings of salvation."

Such was the position taken by Wesley and his friends.

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. viii., p. 240. [2] Ibid. vol. viii., p. 109.

1739 Age 36 Their chief, their only business was to save souls. For this they had a world-wide commission. Nothing short of this could satisfy the yearnings of their nature. Unlike the old Puritans and others, they had no attacks to make on the despotic measures of the court and Church. "In their bosoms there was no rankling grudge against authorities; there was no particle of that venom which, wherever it lodges, infects and paralyses the religious affections."[1] Their sole quarrel was, not with church or state authorities, but with sin and Satan; and their sole object was, not to make proselytes, but to save sinners.

Their congregations, says James Hutton, "were composed of every description of persons, who, without the slightest attempt at order, assembled, crying 'Hurrah!' with one breath, and with the next bellowing and bursting into tears on account of their sins; some poking each other's ribs, and others shouting 'Hallelujah.' It was a jumble of extremes of good and evil; and so distracted alike were both preachers and hearers, that it was enough to make one cry to God for His interference. Here thieves, prostitutes, fools, people of every class, several men of distinction, a few of the learned, merchants, and numbers of poor people who had never entered a place of worship, assembled in crowds and became godly."[2]

Of course persecution followed. "We continued," says Wesley, "to call sinners to repentance in London, Bristol, Bath, and a few other places; but it was not without violent opposition, both from high and low, learned and unlearned. Not only all manner of evil was spoken of us, both in private and public, but the beasts of the people were stirred up almost in all places to knock these mad dogs on the head at once. And when complaint was made of their savage, brutal violence, no magistrate would do us justice."[3]

The following may be taken as specimens of the opposition met with in 1739. On one occasion, Wesley had obtained permission to preach in Pensford church; but, just as he was setting out, he received a letter, saying that the minister had

[1] Taylor's "Wesley and Methodism." [2] Hutton's Memoirs, p. 42.
[3] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 292.

been informed that he was mad, and that, therefore, the permission was withdrawn. Not being allowed to occupy the church, Wesley took his stand in the open air; but in the midst of prayer, two men, hired for the purpose, began to sing ballads, which obliged Wesley and his friends to begin to sing a psalm, so as to drown one noise by another. 1739 Age 36

Another incident must be given. Bath, at that period, was perhaps the most fashionable city in England; and the most renowned man in Bath was Richard, commonly called "Beau," Nash. This accomplished rake, now sixty-five years old, was the son of a glass manufacturer in Wales, and was expelled from Jesus College, Oxford, for his intrigues and wild adventures. At the age of thirty, he was without a fortune, and without talents for acquiring one; and hence, to the end of life, became a gamester. The visit of Queen Anne to Bath, in 1703, had made the city the favourite resort of people of distinction, and, ever after, the amusements of the place were put under the direction of a master of the ceremonies, this sovereignty of the city being decreed to Nash by all ranks of residents and visitors. King of Bath, he had rules posted in the pump-room, from which even royalty itself was not allowed to deviate. He prescribed the dresses in which ladies and gentlemen were to appear at balls, and imperatively fixed the number of dances to be danced. He himself wore a monstrously large white hat, and usually travelled in a post chaise, drawn by six grey horses, honoured with outriders, footmen, French horns, and every other appendage of a pretentious coxcomb. He lived by gambling, and scattered money with as much indifference as he won it. The city of which he was the dandy king was full of fashionable rogues. "Nothing," says the *Weekly Miscellany* of that period, "nothing was to be seen in it but play and the preparations for it. Persons of all characters, distinctions, and denominations sat down to cards from morning till night, and from night till morning; and those who disagreed in everything else agreed in this."

On visiting Bath, Wesley was told that Nash meant to interfere, and was entreated not to attempt to preach. Wesley, however, was not the man to yield to a swaggering rake. He had gone to preach, and preach he would, and did; the

1739 threatenings of Nash having made his congregation much
Age 36. larger than was expected. Besides the poor, he had many of the rich and great. Soon after Wesley began his sermon, the "Beau," in his immense white hat, appeared, and asked by what authority he dared to do what he was doing now. Wesley replied, "By the authority of Jesus Christ, conveyed to me by him who is now Archbishop of Canterbury, when he laid his hands upon me, and said, 'Take thou authority to preach the gospel.'" "But this," said Nash, "is a conventicle, and contrary to act of parliament." "No," answered Wesley, "conventicles are seditious meetings; but here is no sedition: therefore, it is not contrary to act of parliament." "I say it is," cried the man of Bath; "and, besides, your preaching frightens people out of their wits." "Sir," said Wesley, "did you ever hear me preach?" "No." "How then can you judge of what you never heard?" "I judge," he answered, "by common report." "Common report," replied Wesley, "is not enough. Give me leave to ask you, sir, is not your name Nash?" "It is," he said. "Sir," retorted Wesley, "I dare not judge of you by common report." The master of ceremonies was worsted, and, after a pause, simply asked what the people wanted; upon which an old woman begged Wesley to allow her to answer him, and, amid her taunts, the resplendent king of the pump-room sneaked away.

No wonder that the Methodists were opposed. Their preaching, their doctrine, and their whole behaviour were novel. "Being convinced," writes Wesley, "of that important truth, which is the foundation of all real religion, that 'by grace we are saved through faith,' we immediately began declaring it to others. Indeed, we could hardly speak of anything else, either in public or private. It shone upon our minds with so strong a light, that it was our constant theme. It was our daily subject, both in verse and prose; and we vehemently defended it against all mankind. But, in doing this, we were assaulted and abused on every side. We were everywhere represented as mad dogs, and treated accordingly. We were stoned in the streets, and several times narrowly escaped with our lives. In sermons, newspapers, and pamphlets of all kinds, we were painted as unheard of monsters. But this

moved us not; we went on testifying salvation by faith both to small and great, and not counting our lives dear unto ourselves, so we might finish our course with joy."[1] 1739 Age 36

Wesley here mentions the attacks made upon them by the press. The following are specimens:—

The *Scots Magazine*, for 1739, remarks that "Whitefield and the two Wesleys offend against the rules of the Christian church, by preaching in opposition to the opinions and instructions of the bishops." "The Wesleys," continues this Scottish censor, "are more guilty than Whitefield, because they are men of more learning, better judgment, and cooler heads. Let them go over to their proper companies, their favourites, the Dissenters, and utter their extemporary effusions in a conventicle; but not be suffered in our churches hypocritically to use our forms, which they despise. Let them carry their spirit of delusion among their brethren, the Quakers. Let them preach up their election and reprobation doctrines among the Calvinists; and their solifidian tenets among the Antinomians. Let not such bold movers of sedition, and ringleaders of the rabble, to the disgrace of their order, be regularly admitted into those pulpits which they have taken with multitude and with tumult, or, as ignominiously, by stealth."

The clergy also began to bestir themselves. On Trinity Sunday, a sermon on regeneration was preached in the parish churches of Greenwich, and of St. Peter the Poor, London, by the Rev. Ralph Skerret, D.D., chaplain to the Earl of Grantham. The sermon, in 8vo, thirty-six pages, was published; but is scarcely worth noticing. The Methodists, however, are spoken of as "restless deceivers of the people, who make it their daily business to fill the heads of the ignorant and unwary with wild, perplexive notions."

Another sermon, preached before the university of Oxford, on August 5, by the Rev. John Wilder, M.A., rector of St. Aldate's, on "The Trial of the Spirits," brands the Methodists as "deceivers," "babblers," "insolent pretenders," "men of capricious humours, spiritual sleight, and canting craftiness," "novices in divinity," casting "indecent, false, and un-

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xi., p. 472.

1739 Age 36 christian reflections on the clergy," "newfangled teachers, setting up their own fantastic conceits, in opposition to the authority of God, and so bigoted to their wild opinions, and so puffed up with pride and vanity at the success of their enthusiastic labours, that they all appear fully disposed to maintain and defend their cause by more than spiritual weapons, or to die martyrs for it."

On the 14th of October, the Rev. Charles Wheatley, M.A., vicar of Furneux Pelham, Herts, preached in St. Paul's Cathedral, London, a sermon against the "new enthusiasts," on "St. John's test of knowing Christ, and being born of Him." The sermon, with notes, was published, in 8vo, thirty-one pages, but was not calculated to augment the fame of the honest and zealous churchman, who had already given to the public two important ritualistic works, entitled, "A Rational Illustration of the Book of Common Prayer," and "An Historical Vindication of the Fifty-fifth Canon." Mr. Wheatley is less abusive than Mr. Wilder; but yet he thinks it right to describe the Methodists as "rapturous enthusiasts, preaching up unaccountable sensations, violent emotions, and sudden changes;" and likewise "assuming to themselves, upon all occasions, the peculiar language of the Holy Ghost; equalling themselves to prophets and apostles; boasting of immediate inspirations; and laying a blasphemous claim to greater miracles than were ever wrought even by Christ Himself."

Another opponent, in 1739, was Henry Stebbing, a doctor of divinity, a royal chaplain, and preacher to the Honourable Society of Gray's Inn. This gentleman published "A Caution against Religious Delusion," in the shape of "a sermon on the New Birth: occasioned by the pretensions of the Methodists." In this comparatively temperate production, the Methodists are charged with "vain and confident boastings, and with rash uncharitable censures;" with "gathering tumultuous assemblies to the disturbance of the public peace, and with setting at nought all authority and rule;" with "intruding into other men's labours, and with encouraging abstinence, prayer, and other religious exercises, to the neglect of the duties of our station." It is admitted that, when there are "so many combinations for vice," "religious societies for praying, read-

ing (if not expounding) the Scriptures, and singing psalms may be of use for the encouragement of virtue;" but the danger is lest the laymen, who were heads or leaders of these societies, should "grow opinionated of themselves and fond of their own gifts, and should run into wild fancies until the pale of the Church is too strait for them." Before the end of the year 1739, Stebbing's sermon reached a sixth edition. 1739 Age 34

Another antagonist, more violent than Stebbing, was Joseph Trapp, D.D., who published, in 1739, a pamphlet of sixty-nine pages, entitled, "The Nature, Folly, Sin, and Danger of being Righteous over-much; with a particular view to the Doctrines and Practices of certain Modern Enthusiasts. Being the substance of four discourses lately preached in the parish churches of Christ Church and St. Lawrence Jewry, London; and St. Martin's in the Fields, Westminster. By Joseph Trapp, D.D."

In this notable production, it is stated that, "for laymen to officiate in reading prayers to any assembly, except their own families, is an encroachment upon the office of those who are ordained to holy functions; and for them to expound or interpret Scripture is neither laudable nor justifiable, but tends to the confirmation, not the removal, of ignorance." For "a raw novice, though in holy orders" (like Whitefield), "to take upon him, at his first setting out, to be a teacher, not only of all the laity, in all parts of the kingdom, but of the teachers themselves, the learned clergy, many of them learned before he was born, is an outrage upon common decency and common sense; the height of presumption, confidence, and self-sufficiency; so ridiculous as to create the greatest laughter, were it not so deplorable and detestable as to create the greatest grief and abhorrence; especially when vast multitudes are so sottish and wicked as, in a tumultuous manner, to run madding after him." Trapp insinuates that the Methodists "teach such absurd doctrines, and second them with such absurd practices, as to give countenance to the lewd and debauched, the irreligious and profane. In their own imagination, their errors are the height of wisdom, and their vices the most perfect virtues. They think themselves the greatest saints, when, in truth, they are under, strong delusion, in the bond of iniquity, and in the gall of bitterness.

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They have set the nearest and dearest relations at variance; disturbed the quiet of families; and thrown whole neighbourhoods and parishes into confusion. They were half-dissenters *in* the Church, and more dangerous *to* the Church, than those who were total dissenters *from* it." "Methodism was nothing but a revival of the old fanaticism of the last century; when all manner of madness was practised, and all manner of villainy committed in the name of Christ." Its disciples, "like Solomon's madman, cast firebrands, arrows, and death; and send to hell (only because they are not of their own frantic persuasion) millions of Christians much better than themselves."

The author proceeds:—"For a clergyman of the Church of England to pray and preach in the fields, in the country, or in the streets of the city, is perfectly new, a fresh honour to the blessed age in which we have the happiness to live. I am ashamed to speak upon a subject, which is a reproach not only to our Church and country, but to human nature itself. Can it promote the Christian religion to turn it into riot, tumult, and confusion? to make it ridiculous and contemptible, and expose it to the scorn and scoffs of infidels and atheists? To the prevalence of immorality and profaneness, infidelity and atheism, is now added the pest of enthusiasm. Our prospect is very sad and melancholy. Go not after these impostors and seducers; but shun them as you would the plague."

Such are fair specimens of the four fiery sermons preached by Dr. Trapp. Hypocrites, enthusiasts, novelists, ignes fatui, and glaring meteors are the best names which this reverend divine could find for the poor, peaceable, and persecuted Methodists.[1]

Another clerical adversary was "Tristam Land, M.A., late Fellow of Clare Hall, in Cambridge, Curate of St. James,

[1] In the same year, Trapp preached another sermon, On Religious Zeal, before the Oxford university, and the judges presiding at the Oxford assizes. This, at their request, he published, octavo, thirty-two pages. One extract may suffice. Speaking of the Methodists, he describes them as "our modern enthusiasts, pretending to be the only true believers, and by whom the Established Church and clergy had been outraged with unparalelled virulence and malice, insolence and contempt."

Garlickhith; and Lecturer of the united parishes of St. Anthony and St. John Baptist." His sixpenny pamphlet of thirty pages was entitled, "A Letter to the Rev. Mr. Whitefield, with a Letter addressed to the Religious Societies." Whitefield is attacked for teaching the doctrine, that many are baptized without being born again; whereas Tristam Land insists that, according to the teachings of the Church of England, "all infants, at the time they are baptized, are sanctified with the Holy Ghost; and that, though they may afterwards depart from the grace given, and fall into sin, they are not to be commanded to be baptized or born again a second time; for to be born more than once, in a spiritual sense, is just as impossible as to be born twice in a natural. All that can be done in this matter is to use the several means of grace; or, in one word, as the Scripture expresses it, they must be renewed again by repentance." 1739 Æ. 36

This reverend gentleman then proceeds to describe the Methodists as "young quacks in divinity, running about the city, and taking great pains to distract the common people, and to break the peace and unity of the Church. They are like vain persons, who think themselves handsome, and are apt to despise others; for looking upon themselves as exquisite pictures of holiness and as patterns of piety, they represent us (the clergy) as dumb dogs, profane, and carnally minded. They talk much of the pangs of the new birth, their inward feelings, experiences, and spiritual miracles; but their faith is an ill grounded assurance, their hope an unwarrantable presumption, and their charity a censoriousness and a contempt of their brethren of different sentiments to themselves."

Good old Dr. Byrom, in a letter dated February 8, 1739, says, "The book against Mr. Whitefield by Mr. Land is thought a weak piece."[1] No wonder.

Besides these, there was published "An Expostulatory Letter to the Rev. Mr. Whitefield;" also an octavo pamphlet of forty pages, entitled, "Observations and Remarks on Mr. Seagrave's conduct and writings, in which his answer to the Rev. Dr. Trapp's four sermons is more particularly considered." In this latter production, it is asserted that White-

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1863, p. 908.

1739 Age 36 field sinks the house of God into a playhouse, and turns religion to a farce; that prostitutes swarm at his meetings, and there make merchandise as at a country fair; that his congregations are such as crowd to a Smithfield show; and that Whitefield himself is an enthusiast, a blasphemer, and a wavering, wandering preacher of no establishment, but nearly attached to the Dissenting communion, and blending his sermons with a spice both of the Papist and Mahommedan.

In a "Faithful Narrative" of Whitefield's life and character, it is stated that numberless lies and false reports have been raised in London to vilify his character, and to stigmatise his followers; and he was now branded as a mercenary knave. It was also reported that, in Georgia, he had been imprisoned and personally chastised for making the people mad with enthusiasm.

An "Expostulatory Letter" to Whitefield, "and the rest of his brethren, the Methodists of the Church of England," octavo, forty pages, and signed "E. B." charges them with departing from the rubric in *sprinkling children* at baptism, thus prostituting a holy ordinance, and substituting an insignificant, unavailing thing, neither worthy of God, nor beneficial to men. It also urges them to be *dipped* themselves, and thus become exemplars to others.

Besides all these, an attack was made by a young man of eight-and-twenty, curate of All Saints', Bristol, the Rev. Josiah Tucker, afterwards a doctor of divinity, and Dean of Gloucester. In a Letter, dated June 14, 1739, he accuses Whitefield of propagating "blasphemous and enthusiastic notions, which struck at the root of all religion, and made it the jest of those who sat in the seat of the scornful." Wesley replied to this, and concludes by advising Tucker not to meddle with controversy, for his talents were not equal to its management. It would only entangle and bewilder him more and more. Besides, there was no pleasure in answering a man whose head was not adapted to the right directing of disputes.[1]

The next onslaught was more authoritative and serious. On August 1, 1739, Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London, published his "Pastoral Letter," of fifty-five pages, "to the

[1] See "Life of Whitefield. By an Impartial Hand." 1739.

People of his Diocese; especially those of the two great cities of London and Westminster: by way of Caution against Lukewarmness on one hand, and Enthusiasm on the other." Two-thirds of this prelatical pamphlet are on enthusiasm, and are levelled against the Methodists. Numerous extracts are given from Whitefield's Journal, to show—1. That these enthusiasts claim to have *extraordinary communications* with God, and more than ordinary assurances of a special *presence* with them. 2. That they have a special and immediate *mission* from God. 3. That they think and act under the immediate guidance of a *Divine inspiration*. 4. That they speak of their preaching and expounding, and the effects of them, as the sole work of a *Divine power*. 5. That they boast of sudden and surprising effects as wrought by the *Holy Ghost* in consequence of their preaching. 6. That they claim the spirit of *prophecy*. 7. That they speak of themselves in the language, and under the character, of *apostles* of Christ, and even of *Christ* Himself. 8. That they profess to plant and propagate a *new gospel*, as unknown to the generality of ministers and people, in a Christian country. 9. That they endeavour to justify their own *extraordinary* methods of teaching, by casting unworthy reflections upon the parochial clergy, as deficient in the discharge of their duty, and not instructing their people in the true doctrines of Christianity. 1739 Age 36

Thirteen days after the "Pastoral Letter" was published, Whitefield wrote an answer to it, and, in a firm but quiet and respectful way, replied to all the bishop's allegations. He concludes by charging Gibson with propagating a new gospel, because he asserts, that "good works are a *necessary condition* of our being justified in the sight of God." He maintains that *faith* is the only necessary condition, and that *good works* are the necessary fruit and consequence. "This," he writes, "is the doctrine of Jesus Christ; this is the doctrine of the Church of England; and it is, because the generality of the clergy of the Church of England do not preach this doctrine, that I am resolved, God being my helper, to continue instant in season and out of season, to declare it unto all men, let the consequences, as to my own private person, be what they will."

1739 Age 36 If the bishop really believed his accusations to be true, his pastoral is a model of meek writing. On the other hand, Whitefield's answer is one of the smartest productions of his pen; its pith and point somewhat reminding us of the terseness which characterized his friend Wesley.

While Whitefield was skirmishing with the Bishop of London, Wesley was having a brush with the Bishop of Bristol. First they discussed the subject of faith as the only necessary condition of a sinner's justification before God. Then his lordship charged the Methodists with "a horrid thing, a very horrid thing," namely, "pretending to extraordinary revelations and gifts of the Holy Ghost." The conversation concluded thus:—

Bishop. "I hear you administer the sacrament in your societies."

Wesley. "My lord, I never did yet; and I believe I never shall."

Bishop. "I hear too, that many people fall into fits in your societies, and that you pray over them."

Wesley. "I do so, my lord, when any show, by strong cries and tears, that their soul is in deep anguish; and our prayer is often heard."

Bishop. "Very extraordinary indeed! Well, sir, since you ask my advice, I will give it freely. You have no business here; you are not commissioned to preach in this diocese. Therefore, I advise you to go hence."

Wesley. "My lord, my business on earth is, to do what good I can. Wherever, therefore, I think I can do most good, there must I stay, so long as I think so. At present, I think I can do most good here; therefore, here I stay. Being ordained a priest, by the commission I then received, I am a priest of the church universal; and being ordained as fellow of a college, I was not limited to any particular cure, but have an indeterminate commission to preach the word of God in any part of the Church of England. I conceive not, therefore, that in preaching here by this commission I break any human law. When I am convinced I do, then it will be time to ask, shall I obey God or man? But if I should be convinced in the meanwhile that I could advance the glory of God and the salvation of souls, in any other

place more than in Bristol, in that hour, by God's help, I will go hence; which till then I may not do."[1] 1739 Age 36

About the same time, a pamphlet of ninety-six pages was published, entitled, "The Life of the Rev. Mr. George Whitefield, by an Impartial Hand." Impartiality is pretended, but hostility is seen. The object of the Life is evidently to make the subject of it a mark for the shafts of ridicule. Accounts are given of the fracas in St. Margaret's church, Westminster, on Sunday, February 4. There is also "a method of confession drawn up for the use of the women Methodists," professedly taken from the original in Whitefield's or Wesley's own handwriting, and with which, it is alleged, the Deists are delighted. Among other questions, to be asked, as often as occasion required, were the following: "Are you in love? Whom do you love just now, better than any other person in the world? Is not the person an idol? Does any court you? How do you like him? How do you feel yourself when he comes, when he stays, and when he goes away?" A full account is, likewise, furnished of Joseph Periam, a young clerk to an attorney, who had been converted, partly by reading Whitefield's sermons on the new birth, and whom his friends had put into a madhouse—(1) Because he fasted for near a fortnight. (2) Because he prayed so as to be heard several storeys high. (3) Because he had sold his clothes and given the money to the poor. The Methodists are further charged with attempting to take away the liberty of the press; Wesley is accused of placing his converts, when delivered from their violent agitations and distortions, on an eminence, for others to behold them; and Whitefield is charged with saying, that he could produce two cobblers in Bristol, that knew more of true Christianity than all the clergy in the city put together. His Journals are designated rhapsodies and repetitions of spiritual pride, vanity and nonsense; he is accused of wilful and notorious falsehood, and of taking pleasure in being abusive and scurrilous.

All this breathes fury; but the following taken from the *Weekly Miscellany* of July 21, 1739, surpasses it. The Methodist preacher stands on an eminence with admiring and

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 470.

1739 Age 36 subscribing crowds about him. He is young, which is good; looks innocent, which is better; and has no human learning, which is best of all. He spreads his hands and opens his lips as wide as possible. He talks of a sensible new birth; good women around him come to his assistance; he dilates himself; cries out; the hill swells into a mountain; and *parturiunt montes, nascitur ridiculus mus.* Then there is a chorus of ten thousand sighs and groans, deepened with the blowing of bassoons and horns. The Methodists are mad enthusiasts who teach, for dictates of the Holy Spirit, seditions, heresies, and contempt of the ordinances of God and man. They are buffoons in religion, and mountebanks in theology; creatures who disclaim sense and are below argument; visionary antics in gowns and cassocks; so buffeted by the devil as to be qualified to be confessors to the whole island; composing sermons as fast as they can write, and speaking faster than they think; and forming societies of females, who are to confess their love affairs one to another, and to take care that there shall be a supply of new Methodists for future generations.

In the same year, appeared a pamphlet, of twenty-eight pages, entitled "The Methodists; an Humorous, Burlesque Poem, addressed to the Rev. Mr. Whitefield and his followers." The frontispiece represents the great preacher addressing an immense crowd on Kennington Common, while, on the outskirts of the congregation, are coaches of all descriptions, and a gibbet on which three condemned felons are hanging. Describing the Methodists, the poem says:—

> "By rule they eat, by rule they drink,
> Do all things else by rule, but think—
> Accuse their priests of loose behaviour,
> To get more in the laymen's favour;
> Method alone must guide 'em all,
> Whence Methodists themselves they call."

After this, the devil is represented as making a tour from Rome to Oxford, in the course of which he stole the bigoted madness of a Turk, and the wit of a modern atheist, both of which he drenched, dull and deep, in a literary Dutchman's brain, and then, making them his own, and pulling off his horns, and shoeing his cloven foot, dressing himself in a

student's gown, and using for the nonce a distorted face, and, because of the piety of its nasal tones, a Noncon parson's nose, he introduced himself to the Oxford Methodists, and gave them instructions how to act, so as to effect their purposes,—instructions too lascivious to be reprinted. As a *very mild* specimen of this foul-mouthed poem, we give another description of the Methodists :— 1739 Age 36

"All men of thought with laughter view,
Or pity, the mistaken crew ;
Who, mad with Scripture, void of sense,
And thoughtless, novelists commence ;
Swerve from the rules of mother Church,
And leave her basely in the lurch :
To holy *Holt* they all repair,
There join in *folly* and in prayer ;
Next round the *gaols* they hovering fly,
To plague the wretches ere they die ;
And while the children lisp their praise,
'Bless 'em !' each good old woman says."

At the risk of exhausting the reader's patience, we must notice another anti-Methodist pamphleteer, who, in 1739, did his little best to strangle the new-born system at its birth. This was a certain "James Bate, M.A., Rector of St. Paul's, Deptford ; and formerly Chaplain to His Excellency Horatio Walpole, Esq."

First of all, the redoubtable author gave to the world a pamphlet of thirty-eight pages, bearing the title, "Methodism Displayed ; or Remarks upon Mr. Whitefield's Answer to the Bishop of London's Pastoral Letter." In this production, Whitefield is charged with causing numbers of poor tradesmen to leave their families to starve, only to ramble after himself ; in dividing the word of God, he violently divides text from context, and makes arrant nonsense of both ; he shuffles and prevaricates ; treats the bishop with saucy sneers ; is guilty of flat falsehoods, disingenuous quirks, and mean evasions ; perfidiously tramples upon the canons of the Church ; and flies in the face of his diocesan with unparalelled pride and impudence.

Not having exhausted all his wrath, the same reverend gentleman, at the end of the year, issued another manifesto, of sixty-six pages, entitled, "Quakero-Methodism ; or a Confu-

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tation of the First Principles of the Quakers and Methodists." This was a dear shilling's worth, written in reply to a letter on Bate's former pamphlet "by T. S——y, Esq." Bate asserts that the whole performance of the "Quakero-Methodist" (as T. S——y is called) may be ranked under the two heads of scurrility and sophistry; but as God, at whose altar he serves, has forbid him to return railing for railing, he will give no answer to the scurrility whatever. He then, notwithstanding this, proceeds to accuse his adversary of having "troubled the public with a load of stupidity, folly, and nonsense." He alleges against him "insipid sneers, like the grins of an idiot;" he tells him that "the shortest cut for him to avoid writing nonsense is to lay down his pen;" that his "whole stock of knowledge has been laid in at some expounding house that was under the influence of the spirit of presumption, ignorance, pride, and arrogance;" and that "his arguments have never more than two gentle faults, false premises and a false conclusion." He says, Whitefield "chews" the charges of the Bishop of London, "just as an ass mumbles a thistle, without either the courage to swallow it, or the sense to lay it down;" and concludes by assuring his opponent that he could have "goaded him with the sharpest, bitterest, and severest sarcasms, and have scourged his spiritual pride with wholesome severity;" but in mercy he has refrained from using such "a whip of scorpions."

The magazines and newspapers of the period were filled with similar abuse of the poor Methodists. The writer has examined most of them, and has been struck with two facts:—(1) of those admitting letters and articles against the Methodists, the fairest and most moderate was the *Gentleman's Magazine;* and (2) the bitterest and most violent was the professedly religious *Weekly Miscellany*, a weekly folio sheet of four pages. The following is a mild specimen from the latter, and refers not only to the movements of Wesley and Whitefield in the south of England, but of Ingham in the north. After accusing Whitefield of "behaviour disgraceful to the Christian religion and to the ministerial office," the journalist proceeds to say that—

"The clergy had all refused him their pulpits, and the lord mayor the halls and markets of the city." He was "a con-

ceited boaster and heterodox intruder; whose next performance was to be accompanied with a chorus of ten thousand sighs and groans, deepened with bassoons. In the approaching winter, the town would be entertained with harlequin turned Methodist, by way of reprisals, since the Methodist had turned harlequin. In Yorkshire, by the preaching of the Methodists, the spirit of enthusiasm had so prevailed, that almost every man who could hammer out a chapter in the Bible had turned an expounder of the Scripture, to the great decay of industry, and the almost ruin of the woollen manufacture, which seemed threatened with destruction for want of hands to work it." "Methodism has laid aside play-books and poems, for Scripture phrases and hymns of its own composing. Its disciples were never easy but when they were in a church, or expounding the Bible, which they could do offhand, from Genesis to Revelation, with great ease and power. They had given away their finery to tattered beggars, resolving to wear the coarsest attire and to live upon the most ordinary diet. They hired barns, where they met at six in the evening; expounded, prayed, and sang psalms till towards ten; and then had a lovefeast to communicate their experiences, especially as to love affairs." "Several fine ladies, who used to wear French silks, French hoops of four yards wide, bob-wigs, and white satin smock petticoats, were turned Methodists, and now wore stuff gowns, common night-mobs, and plain bays for *Jennys*."

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Numbers of similar extracts might be given from the newspapers and periodicals of 1739; but the reader has had enough of scurrilous and lying hodge-podge to satisfy the cravings of the greatest gossip.

Such were the premonitory mutterings of the storm in which the Methodist movement was cradled. Mobs threatened; newspapers, magazines, and other periodicals fulminated their malicious squibs; prelates, priests, and doctors of divinity became militant pamphleteers; but, in the midst of all, Wesley and his friends calmly proceeded in their glorious calling. Some even, who were animated with a friendly feeling towards them, looked upon their course of conduct with alarm. Good Dr. Doddridge, in a letter dated May 24, 1739, writes:—

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"I think the Methodists sincere; I hope some may be reformed, instructed, and made serious by their means. I saw Mr. Whitefield preaching on Kennington Common last week to an attentive multitude, and heard much of him at Bath; but, supposing him sincere and in good earnest, I still fancy that he is but a *weak* man—much too positive, says rash things, and is bold and enthusiastic. I am most heartily glad to hear that any *real* good is done anywhere to the souls of men; but whether these Methodists are in a right way—whether they are warrantable in all their conduct,—whether *poor* people should be urged, through different persons successively, to pray from four in the morning till eleven at night, is not clear to me; and I am less satisfied with the high pretences they make to the Divine influence. I think what Mr. Whitefield says and does comes but little short of an assumption of inspiration or infallibility."[1]

Another friend, Mr. T. Hervey, writing in the same month to Samuel Wesley, at Tiverton, says, that he is anxious "to stop the spread and prevalence of several very strange and pestilent opinions;" and expresses the hope that this may be done effectually by the elder brother of Wesley, whom he designates "the dear, but deluded man." He then proceeds to state that—

"These pestilent opinions are—1. That the method of education, the distinction, order, degrees, and even robes and habits of the university are all anti-Christian. 2. That nothing is taught in it but learning which opposes the power of God. 3. That whoso is born of God is also taught of God, not in any limited sense, but so as to render the use of all natural means of no effect. 4. That all human learning, however said to be sanctified of God, entirely disqualifies a man from preaching the true gospel of Jesus Christ. 5. That none have a right to preach, but such as are immediately called to it by the Holy Ghost. 6. That an established ministry is a mere invention of man. 7. That the Church of England and all its authority are founded on and supported by a lie; and that all who receive a power of preaching from it are in a state of slavery."[2]

This was a kind and well meant letter, but it was pregnant with mistakes. Still it tends to show the enormous difficulties encountered by the Methodists at the commencement of their history. Sometimes they met a friend, though not often; and it is a pleasing duty to introduce godly Joseph Williams, of Kidderminster, as one who sympathised with their indefatigable endeavours to save the souls of their

[1] Doddridge's Correspondence, vol. iii., p. 381.
[2] Priestley's Letters, p. 99.

fellow men. Under the date of September 17, 1739, he writes concerning the two Wesleys, Whitefield, and Ingham :— 1739 Age 36

"The common people flock to hear them, and, in most places, hear them gladly. They commonly preach once or twice every day; and expound the Scriptures in the evening to religious societies, who have their society rooms for that purpose." He then proceeds to give an account of his hearing Charles Wesley preach at Bristol. Standing on a table, in a field, the preacher, with eyes and hands lifted up to heaven, prayed with uncommon fervour and fluency. "He then preached about an hour in such a manner as I scarce ever heard any man preach. Though I have heard many a finer sermon, yet I think I never heard any man discover such evident signs of vehement desire" [to benefit his hearers]. "With unusual fervour, he acquitted himself as an ambassador for Christ; and although he used no notes, nor had anything in his hand but a Bible, yet he delivered his thoughts in a rich, copious variety of expression, and with so much propriety, that I could not observe anything incoherent through the whole performance, which he concluded with singing, prayer, and the usual benediction.

"Afterward, I waited on him at Mr. Norman's. He received me in a very friendly manner. Before he would take any refreshment, he, with a few friends that waited on him, sung a hymn, and then prayed for a blessing, as at set meals. After tea, we sung another hymn; and then I went with them to the religious society, and found the place so thronged, that it was with great difficulty we reached the centre of it. We found them singing a hymn; he then prayed; and proceeded to expound the twelfth chapter of the gospel of St. John, in a sweet, savoury, spiritual manner. This was followed by singing another hymn; and he then prayed over a great number of bills presented by the society, about twenty of which respected spiritual cases. Never did I hear such praying. Never did I see or hear such evident marks of fervency in the service of God. At the close of every petition, a serious Amen, like a gentle, rushing sound of waters, ran through the whole audience. Such evident marks of a lively fervent devotion, I was never witness to before. If there be such a thing as heavenly music upon earth, I

1739 Age 36 heard it there. I do not remember my heart to have been so elevated in Divine love and praise, as it was there and then, for many years past, if ever. Notwithstanding some errors, which, as mere men, they may be liable to, I cannot but believe that God is with them of a truth, and hath raised them up in this day of general defection from gospel purity, simplicity, and zeal, for signal service and usefulness in His church."[1]

In a letter to Charles Wesley, written in the month of September, 1739, Williams adds: "I heartily wish you God speed. I bless you in the name of the Lord. Fear not what men can do unto you. With Him your judgment is, and your reward with your God."[2]

Such a testimony from a man so devout, enlightened, and justly famed as Joseph Williams, the Kidderminster carpet weaver, is quite as weighty as any testimony of an opposite character from either Bishop Gibson, or any priest or prelate then watching on the walls of Zion.

We must now return to Wesley at Bristol. Every night he expounded to societies. These were small gatherings of religious people, which had continued meeting for godly purposes for about the last fifty years;[3] for it is important to remember that the "Religious Societies" formed in the days of Dr. Horneck, previous to the abdication of King James, and again revived in the reign of Queen Mary, were not confined to London and Westminster, but existed in different towns throughout the kingdom. We find them in Oxford, Nottingham, Gloucester, Bristol, Newcastle, Dublin, Kilkenny, and other places; and all acting substantially according to the same rules and regulations. They met to pray, sing psalms, and read the Scriptures together; and to reprove, exhort, and edify one another by religious conference. They also carried out designs of charity, such as supporting lectures and daily prayers in churches, releasing imprisoned debtors, and relieving the poor and sending their children to school. In 1737, Whitefield preached "a

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1815, p. 457. [2] Ibid. 1828, p. 382.
[3] See a full account of them in "The Life and Times of the Rev. Samuel Wesley, M.A."

sermon before the "Religious Societies" at one of their general quarterly meetings in Bow church, London, from the text, Ecclesiastes iv. 9–12, in which he strongly advocated the practice of Christians meeting together for religious fellowship. "As coals," says he, "if placed asunder, soon go out, but if heaped together, enliven each other, and afford a lasting heat;" so it is with Christians. 1739 Age 36

Such were the "Religious Societies" which existed for more than half-a-century before the formation of the "United Societies" of the people called Methodists; and in whose rooms and meetings, in London, Bristol, and elsewhere, Whitefield and the Wesley brothers, for a few years, were accustomed to read and explain the Scriptures almost every night. On arriving in Bristol, Wesley found such societies as these assembling in Castle Street, in Gloucester Lane, in Weavers' Hall, in Nicholas Street, in the Back Lane, and in Baldwin Street, and at once began expounding to them the Epistle to the Romans, and other portions of the New Testament; and it is a remarkable fact that, with one or two exceptions, all the scenes about to be mentioned took place in these society meetings, or in private dwellings. We furnish them as we find them.

April 17. At Baldwin Street, we called upon God to confirm His word. Immediately, one that stood by cried out aloud, with the utmost vehemence, even as in the agonies of death. But we continued in prayer, till a new song was put into her mouth, a thanksgiving unto our God. Soon after, two other persons were seized with strong pain, and constrained to roar for the disquietude of their heart. But it was not long before they likewise burst forth into praise to God their Saviour. The last who called upon God, as out of the belly of hell, was a stranger in Bristol; and, in a short space, he also was overwhelmed with joy and love, knowing that God had healed his backslidings.

April 21. At Weavers' Hall, a young man was suddenly seized with a violent trembling all over, and, in a few minutes, sunk to the ground. But we ceased not calling upon God, till He raised him up full of peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

April 24. At Baldwin Street, a young man, after a sharp though short agony, both of body and mind, found his soul filled with peace, knowing in whom he had believed.

April 26. At Newgate, I was led to pray that God would bear witness to His word. Immediately one, and another, and another sunk to the earth; they dropped on every side as thunderstruck. One of them cried aloud. We besought God in her behalf, and He

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turned her heaviness into joy. A second being in the same agony, we called upon God for her also; and He spoke peace unto her soul. In the evening, one was so wounded by the sword of the Spirit, that you would have imagined she could not live a moment. But immediately His abundant kindness was shown, and she loudly sang of His righteousness.

April 27. All Newgate rang with the cries of those whom the word of God cut to the heart; two of whom were in a moment filled with joy, to the astonishment of those that beheld them.

April 30. While I was preaching at Newgate, a woman broke out into strong cries and tears. Great drops of sweat ran down her face, and all her bones shook; but both her body and soul were healed in a moment.

May 1. At Baldwin Street, my voice could scarce be heard amidst the groanings of some, and the cries of others calling aloud to Him that is mighty to save; and ten persons then began to say in faith, "My Lord and my God!" A Quaker, who stood by, was very angry, and was biting his lips, and knitting his brows, when he dropped down as thunderstruck. The agony he was in was even terrible to behold. We prayed for him, and he soon lifted up his head with joy, and joined us in thanksgiving. A bystander, John Haydon, a weaver, a man of regular life and conversation, one that constantly attended the public prayers and sacrament, and was zealous for the Church, and against Dissenters, laboured to convince the people that all this was a delusion of the devil; but next day, while reading a sermon on "Salvation by Faith," he suddenly changed colour, fell off his chair, and began screaming, and beating himself against the ground. The neighbours were alarmed, and flocked together. When I came in, I found him on the floor, the room being full of people, and two or three holding him as well as they could. He immediately fixed his eyes on me, and said, "Ay, this is he I said deceived the people. But God has overtaken me. I said it was a delusion of the devil; but this is no delusion." Then he roared aloud, "O thou devil! thou cursed devil! yea, thou legion of devils! thou canst not stay in me. Christ will cast thee out. I know His work is begun. Tear me in pieces, if thou wilt; but thou canst not hurt me." He then beat himself against the ground; his breast heaving, as if in the pangs of death, and great drops of sweat trickling down his face. We all betook ourselves to prayer. His pangs ceased, and both his body and soul were set at liberty. With a clear, strong voice, he cried, "This is the Lord's doing; and it is marvellous in our eyes. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, from this time forth for evermore." I called again an hour after. We found his body weak as that of an infant, and his voice lost; but his soul was in peace, full of love, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God.[1] The women of our society met at seven, and, during prayer, one of them fell

[1] See Priestley's Letters, p. 102.

into a violent agony; but soon after began to cry out, with confidence, "My Lord and my God." 1739 Age 36

May 12. In the evening, three persons, almost at once, sunk down as dead, having all their sins set in array before them; but, in a short time, they were raised up, and knew that the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world, had taken away their sins.

May 16. While I was declaring at Baptist Mills, "He was wounded for our transgressions," a middle aged man began violently beating his breast. During our prayer, God put a new song into his mouth.

May 19. At Weavers' Hall, a woman first, and then a boy, was overwhelmed with sin, and sorrow, and fear. But we cried to God, and their souls were delivered.

May 20. In the evening God spoke to three whose souls were all storm and tempest, and immediately there was a great calm.

May 21. Although the people had seen signs and wonders, yet many would not believe. They could not, indeed, deny the facts; but they could explain them away. Some said, "These were purely natural effects; the people fainted away only because of the heat and closeness of the rooms." Others were "sure it was all a cheat; they might help it if they would. Else why were these things only in their private societies?" To-day, our Lord answered for Himself; for, while I was preaching, He began to make bare His arm, not in a close room, neither in private, but in the open air, and before more than two thousand witnesses. One, and another, and another were struck to the earth; exceedingly trembling at the presence of His power. Others cried, with a loud and bitter cry, "What must we do to be saved?" And, in less than an hour, seven persons, wholly unknown to me till that time, were rejoicing, and singing, and, with all their might, giving thanks to the God of their salvation. In the evening, at Nicholas Street, I was interrupted, almost as soon as I had begun to speak, by the cries of one who strongly groaned for pardon and peace. Others dropped down as dead. Thomas Maxfield began to roar out, and beat himself against the ground, so that six men could scarcely hold him. Except John Haydon, I never saw one so torn of the evil one. Many others began to cry out to the Saviour of all, insomuch that all the house, and, indeed, all the street for some space, was in an uproar. But we continued in prayer, and the greater part found rest to their souls. I think twenty-nine in all had their heaviness turned into joy this day.

June 15. At Wapping (London), many of those that heard began to call upon God with strong cries and tears. Some sunk down, and there remained no strength in them; others exceedingly trembled and quaked; some were torn with a kind of convulsive motion in every part of their bodies; and that so violently, that often four or five persons could not hold one of them. I have seen many hysterical and many epileptic fits; but none of them were like these, in many respects. One woman was greatly offended, being sure they might help it if they would; but she also dropped down in as violent an agony as the rest. Twenty-six of those who had been thus affected were filled with peace and joy.

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June 16. At Fetter Lane, some fell prostrate on the ground; others burst out into loud praise and thanksgiving; and many openly testified, there had been no such day as this since January the first preceding.

June 22. In the society (Bristol) one before me dropped down as dead, and presently a second, and a third. Five others sunk down in half an hour, most of whom were in violent agonies. In their trouble, we called upon the Lord, and He gave us an answer of peace. All, except one, went away rejoicing and praising God.

June 23. This evening another was seized with strong pangs; but in a short time her soul was delivered.

June 24. In the evening, a girl and four or five other persons were deeply convinced of sin; and, with sighs and groans, called upon God for deliverance.

June 25. About ten in the morning J——e C——r, as she was sitting at her work, was suddenly seized with grievous terrors of mind, attended with strong trembling; but, at the society in the evening, God turned her heaviness into joy. Five or six others were also cut to the heart this day; and, soon after, found Him whose hands made whole.

June 26. Three persons terribly felt the wrath of God abiding on them at the society this evening. But, upon prayer being made on their behalf, He was pleased soon to lift up the light of His countenance upon them.

June 30. At Weavers' Hall, seven or eight persons were constrained to roar aloud; but they were all relieved upon prayer, and sang praises unto our God, and unto the Lamb that liveth for ever and ever.

July 1. A young woman sunk down at Rose Green in a violent agony both of body and mind: as did five or six persons, in the evening, at the new room, at whose cries many were greatly offended. The same offence was given in the morning by one at Weavers' Hall; and by eight or nine others at Gloucester Lane in the evening.

Here we pause. On June 25, Whitefield wrote to Wesley as follows:—

"HONOURED SIR,—I cannot think it right in you to give so much encouragement to those convulsions which people have been thrown into under your ministry. Was I to do so, how many would cry out every night? I think it is tempting God to require such signs. That there is something of God in it, I doubt not. But the devil, I believe, interposes. I think it will encourage the French Prophets, take people from the written word, and make them depend on visions, convulsions, etc., more than on the promises and precepts of the gospel."[1]

Twelve days after, Whitefield was in Bristol, and Wesley wrote as follows:—

"July 7. I had an opportunity to talk with Mr. Whitefield of those outward signs which had so often accompanied the work of God. I found

[1] *Methodist Magazine* 1849, p. 165.

his objections were chiefly grounded on gross misrepresentations of matters of fact. But next day he had an opportunity of informing himself better; for, in the application of his sermon, four persons sunk down close to him, almost in the same moment. One of them lay without either sense or motion. A second trembled exceedingly. The third had strong convulsions all over his body, but made no noise, unless by groans. The fourth, equally convulsed, called upon God, with strong cries and tears. From this time, I trust, we shall all suffer God to carry on His own work in the way that pleaseth Him." 1739 Age 36

This was an important crisis. Without expressing any opinion respecting these "signs," as Wesley calls them, we cannot but admire Wesley's wish and hope that God may be allowed to work His own work in His own way. Of all men living, Wesley was one of the least likely to desire novelties like these; but he was wise enough, and reverent enough, not to interpose when God was working, and to say, that, unless the work was done after a certain fashion, he should object to its being done at all. Some, in modern times, have been in danger of doing this. Sinners have been undeniably converted; but because they have not been converted at the times, or in the places, or by the instrumentalities which men have chosen to commend, they have objected to such conversions, and tacitly desired not to have them multiplied. This was not Wesley's way. He was one of the greatest sticklers for church order and religious decorum; but he was not the man to protest, that, unless God's work was carried on in accordance with his own predilections, he should object to it altogether. His words are golden ones, and worth remembering by all his followers:—"*From this time, I trust, we shall all suffer God to carry on His own work in the way that pleaseth Him.*"

Whitefield's objections were silenced. He came, he saw, and he was conquered. He writes, under date of July 7:—

"I had a useful conference about many things with my honoured friend Mr. John Wesley. I found that Bristol had great reason to bless God for his ministry. The congregations I observed to be much more serious and affected than when I left them; and their loud and repeated Amens, which they put up to every petition, as well as the exemplariness of their conversation in common life, plainly show that they have not received the grace of God in vain. Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but how is it that ye cannot discern the signs of these times? That good, great good, is done is evident. What is it but little less than blasphemy

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against the Holy Ghost to impute this great work to delusion, and to the power of the devil?"[1]

We resume Wesley's notices of what he designates the "signs" of the work of God.

July 23. On several evenings this week many were deeply convinced; but none were delivered from that painful conviction. I fear we have grieved the Spirit of the jealous God, by questioning His work; and that, therefore, He is withdrawn from us for a season. But He will return and abundantly pardon.

July 30. Two more were in strong pain, both their souls and bodies being well-nigh torn asunder. But, though we cried unto God, there was no answer. One of them cried aloud, though not articulately, for twelve or fourteen hours; when her soul was set at liberty. She was a servant, and her master forbid her returning to his service, saying, he would have none in his house who had received the Holy Ghost.

August 5. Six persons at the new room were deeply convinced of sin; three of whom were a little comforted by prayer.

August 11. In the evening two were seized with strong pangs, as were four the next evening, and the same number at Gloucester Lane on Monday; one of whom was greatly comforted.

August 14. Three at the new room this evening were cut to the heart; but their wound was not as yet healed.

A fortnight after this, Charles Wesley came to Bristol, and John removed to London. The work still progressed at Bristol. In one instance, a woman screamed for mercy, so as to drown Charles's voice. On another occasion, he "heard on all sides the sighing of them that were in captivity." "The Lord added to the church daily."

In London, numbers had been converted under the ministry of Charles Wesley, Whitefield, and others; but there is no evidence to show that there had been any "convulsions" like those at Bristol. It is also a curious fact, that, though Wesley's preaching on Kennington Common, in Moorfields, and in other places in the metropolis, was crowned with great success, there were hardly any instances of paralysing paroxysms analogous to those already mentioned. When he returned to Bristol, in October, we find a renewal of such cases.

October 11. A woman showed the agony of her soul by crying aloud to God for help. She continued in great torment all night; but, while

[1] Whitefield's Journal.

we were praying for her in the morning, God delivered her out of her distress. 1739 Age 36

October 12. I was under some concern, with regard to one or two persons, who were tormented in an unaccountable manner; and seemed to be indeed lunatic, as well as sore vexed.

October 23. I was pressed to visit a young woman at Kingswood. I found her on the bed, two or three persons holding her. Anguish, horror, and despair, above all description, appeared in her pale face. The thousand distortions of her whole body showed how the dogs of hell were gnawing at her heart. The shrieks intermixed were scarce to be endured. She screamed out, "I am damned, damned; lost for ever! Six days ago you might have helped me. But it is past. I am the devil's now, I have given myself to him: his I am, him I must serve, with him I must go to hell; I will be his, I will serve him, I will go with him to hell; I cannot be saved, I will not be saved. I must, I will, I will be damned!" She then begun praying to the devil. We began,—"Arm of the Lord, awake, awake!" She immediately sank down as asleep; but, as soon as we left off, broke out again, with inexpressible vehemence: "Stony hearts, break! I am a warning to you. Break, break, poor stony hearts! I am damned, that you may be saved. You need not be damned, though I must." She then fixed her eyes on the corner of the ceiling, and said, "There he is. Come, good devil, come. You said you would dash my brains out: come, do it quickly. I am yours, I will be yours." We interrupted her by calling again upon God; on which she sunk down as before: and another young woman began to roar out as loud as she had done. My brother now came in, it being about nine o'clock. We continued in prayer till past eleven; when God, in a moment, spoke peace into the soul, first of the first tormented, and then of the other. And they both joined in singing praise to Him who had "stilled the enemy and the avenger."

October 25. I was sent for to one in Bristol, who was taken ill the evening before. She lay on the ground furiously gnashing her teeth, and after awhile roared aloud. It was not easy for three or four persons to hold her, especially when the name of Jesus was named. We prayed; the violence of her symptoms ceased, though without a complete deliverance. In the evening, I was sent for to her again. She began screaming before I came into the room; then broke out into a horrid laughter, mixed with blasphemy. One, who apprehended a preternatural agent to be concerned in this, asking, "How didst thou dare to enter into a Christian?" was answered, "She is not a Christian—she is mine." This was followed by fresh trembling, cursing, and blaspheming. My brother coming in, she cried out, "Preacher! Field preacher! I don't love field preaching." This was repeated two hours together, with spitting, and all the expressions of strong aversion. We left her at twelve, and called again at noon next day. And now it was, that God showed He heareth prayer. All her pangs ceased in a moment: she was filled with peace, and knew that the son of wickedness was departed from her.

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October 27. I was sent for to Kingswood again, to one of those who had been so ill before. A violent rain began just as I set out. Just at that time, the woman (then three miles off) cried out, "Yonder comes Wesley, galloping as fast as he can." When I was come, she burst into a horrid laughter, and said, "No power, no power; no faith, no faith. She is mine; her soul is mine. I have her, and will not let her go." We begged of God to increase our faith. Meanwhile, her pangs increased more and more; so that one would have imagined, by the violence of the throes, her body must have been shattered to pieces. One, who was clearly convinced this was no natural disorder, said, "I think Satan is let loose. I fear he will not stop here," and added, "I command thee in the name of the Lord Jesus, to tell if thou hast commission to torment any other soul." It was immediately answered, "I have. L——y C——r, and S——h J——s." We betook ourselves to prayer again; and ceased not, till she began, with a clear voice, and composed, cheerful look, to sing, "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow."

The reader must be told that L——y C——r and S——h J——s lived at some distance, and, at the time, were in perfect health. The day after, they were affected in the same way as the poor creature just delivered. Wesley writes:—

October 28. I called at Mrs. J——'s, in Kingswood. L——y C——r and S——h J——s were there. It was scarce a quarter of an hour before the former fell into a strange agony; and, presently after, the latter. The violent convulsions all over their bodies were such as words cannot describe. Their cries and groans were too horrid to be borne; till one of them, in a tone not to be expressed, said, "Where is your faith now? Come, go to prayers. I will pray with you." We took the advice, and poured out our souls before God, till L——y C——r's agonies so increased, that it seemed she was in the pangs of death. But, in a moment, God spoke; and both her body and soul were healed. We continued in prayer till past midnight, when S——h J——'s voice was also changed, and she began to call upon God. This she did for the greatest part of the night. In the morning, we renewed our prayers, while she was crying continually, "I burn! I burn! O what shall I do? I have a fire within me. I cannot bear it. Lord Jesus! help! Amen, Lord Jesus!"

A few other cases occurred in 1739; and, notably, one on November 30, when seven persons were grievously tormented, and Wesley and his friends continued in prayer from the time of evening service till nine o'clock next morning, that is, for about fifteen hours, a case almost unparalleled in the history of the church of Christ.

These are strange and mysterious facts; and, what adds to the strangeness, is that, excepting the cases in London, on June 15, 16, and September 17, 18, all of them occurred

in Bristol and its immediate neighbourhood. During the space of time which these extracts cover, Wesley preached at Bath, Kennington Common, Moorfields, Blackheath, Gloucester, Bradford, Wells, Oxford, and in several towns in Wales, and other places; but scenes like those above described were never witnessed except in Bristol. It is also a curious circumstance, that, though the preaching of Charles Wesley and of Whitefield was quite as faithful as the preaching of Wesley himself, and was far more impassioned, yet no such "signs" seem to have been attendant on their ministry as were attendant on his. Similar effects sometimes followed the preaching of Cennick, during Wesley's absence in London, but these occurred also either at Kingswood or in Bristol. Writing to Wesley under date of September 12, 1739, he says:— 1739 Age 36

"On Monday night, I was preaching at the school on the forgiveness of sins, when numbers cried out with a loud and bitter cry. Indeed, it seemed that the devil and the powers of darkness were come among us. My mouth was stopped. The cries were terrifying. It was pitch dark; it rained much; and the wind blew vehemently. Large flashes of lightning and loud claps of thunder mingled with the screams and exclamations of the people. The hurry and confusion cannot be expressed. The whole place seemed to resemble the habitation of apostate spirits; many raving up and down, and crying, 'The devil will have me; I am his servant! I am damned! My sins can never be pardoned! I am gone, gone for ever!' A young man was in such horrors, that seven or eight persons could scarce hold him. He roared like a dragon: 'Ten thousand devils, millions, millions of devils are about me!' This continued three hours, and what a power reigned amongst us! Some cried out with a hollow voice, 'Mr. Cennick! Bring Mr. Cennick!' I came to all that desired me. They then spurned me with all their strength, grinding their teeth, and expressing all the fury that heart can conceive. Their eyes were staring and their faces swollen, and several have since told me, that when I drew near, they felt fresh rage, and longed to tear me in pieces. I never saw the like, nor even the shadow of it before. Yet I was not in the least afraid, as I knew God was on our side."[1]

Such are the facts; nothing has been distorted, and nothing kept back. They were occasionally repeated after the year 1739, but not often. A few cases subsequently occurred in Bristol, and also in London, and in Newcastle; but nearly all related in Wesley's Journals are contained in the extracts already given.

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1778, p. 179.

1739 Age 36 What shall be said concerning them? For a hundred and thirty years, they have been sneered at by Wesley's enemies, and have also puzzled Wesley's friends. No such results attended Whitefield's ministry, and Whitefield himself regarded them with suspicion and dislike. Charles Wesley, at Newcastle, in 1743, did his utmost to discourage them. He writes:—

"Many, no doubt, were, at our first preaching, struck down, both soul and body, into the depth of distress. Their *outward affections* were easy to be imitated. Many counterfeits I have already detected. The first night I preached here, half my words were lost through their outcries. Last night, before I began, I gave public notice that whosoever cried, so as to drown my voice, should be carried to the farthest corner of the room. But my porters had no employment the whole night; yet the Lord was with us, mightily convincing of sin and of righteousness. I am more and more convinced, the fits were a device of Satan to stop the course of the gospel."[1]

Samuel Wesley was in great doubt respecting them, and, in a letter dated September 3, 1739, asks:—"Did these agitations ever begin during the use of any collects of the Church? or during the preaching of any sermon that had before been preached within consecrated walls without effect? or during the inculcating any other doctrine besides that of your new birth?"[2]

The Rev. Ralph Erskine wrote to Wesley thus: "Some of the instances you give seem to be exemplified, in the outward manner, by the cases of Paul and the gaoler, as also Peter's hearers (Acts ii.). The last instance you give of some struggling as in the agonies of death, is to me somewhat more inexplicable, if it do not resemble the child of whom it is said, that 'when he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down and tore him.' I make no question, Satan, so far as he gets power, may exert himself on such occasions, partly to mar and hinder the beginning of the good work, in the persons that are touched with the sharp arrows of conviction; and partly also to prevent the success of the gospel on others. However, the merciful issue of these conflicts, in the conversion of the persons thus affected, is the main thing."

[1] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. i., pp. 314–316.
[2] Priestley's Letters, p. 107.

Erskine proceeds to state, that they have something, in Scotland, analogous to what had occurred in Bristol. Sometimes a whole congregation, in a flood of tears, would cry out at once, so as to drown the voice of the minister.[1] 1739 Age 36

The Rev. William Hales, D.D., in his "Methodism Inspected," accounts for these paroxysms on "natural grounds; the sympathetic nature of all violent emotions being well known to those who have studied the physical and moral constitution of man."

Southey writes:—

"A powerful doctrine, preached with passionate sincerity, produced a powerful effect upon weak minds, ardent feelings, and disordered fancies. There are passions which are as infectious as the plague, and fear itself is not more so than fanaticism. When once these bodily affections were declared to be the throes of the new birth, a free licence was proclaimed for every kind of extravagance; and when the preacher encouraged them to throw off all restraint, and abandon themselves before the congregation to these mixed sensations of mind and body, the consequences were what might be anticipated."

Southey forgets that "powerful doctrine" was preached, with as much "passionate sincerity," by Whitefield and by Charles Wesley, as by Wesley himself; but without the same effects. Besides, it is untrue that Wesley ever "encouraged" the affected people "to abandon themselves to these mixed sensations of mind and body."

The Rev. R. Watson writes:—

"That cases of real enthusiasm occurred at this and subsequent periods, is indeed allowed. There are always nervous, dreamy, and excitable people to be found; and the emotion produced among these would often be communicated by natural sympathy. No one could be blamed for this, unless he had encouraged the excitement for its own sake, or taught the people to regard it as a sign of grace, which most assuredly Mr. Wesley never did. Nor is it correct to represent these effects, genuine and fictitious together, as peculiar to Methodism. Great and rapid results were produced in the first ages of Christianity, but not without 'outcries,' and strong corporeal as well as mental emotions. Like effects often accompanied the preaching of eminent men at the Reformation; and many of the Puritan and Nonconformist ministers had similar successes in our own country. In Scotland, and also among the grave Presbyterians of New England, previous to the rise of Methodism, the ministry of faithful men had been attended by very similar circumstances;

[1] "Life and Diary of Rev. Ralph Erskine," p. 293.

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and, on a smaller scale, the same results have followed the ministry of modern missionaries of different religious societies in various parts of the world. It may be laid down as a principle established by fact, that whenever a zealous and faithful ministry is raised up, after a long, spiritual dearth, the early effects of that ministry are not only powerful, but often attended with extraordinary circumstances; nor are such extraordinary circumstances necessarily extravagancies because they are not common. It is neither irrational nor unscriptural to suppose, that times of great national darkness and depravity should require a strong remedy; and that the attention of the people should be roused by circumstances which could not fail to be noticed by the most unthinking. We do not attach primary importance to secondary circumstances; but they are not to be wholly disregarded. The Lord was not in the wind, nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire, but in the still small voice; yet that still small voice might not have been heard, except by minds roused from their inattention by the shaking of the earth and the sounding of the storm."

Isaac Taylor writes:—

"These disorders resembled, in some of their features, the demoniacal possessions mentioned in the gospel history. The bodily agitations were perhaps as extreme in the one class of instances as in the other; nevertheless, there is no real analogy between the two. The demoniacs were *found* in this state by Christ where He went preaching; they did not *become such* while listening to Him. Besides, in no one instance recorded in the Gospels or Acts, did demoniacal possession, or any bodily agitations resembling it, come on as the initial stage of conversion. How then are we to dispose of such cases? Perhaps not at all to our satisfaction, except so far as this, that they serve to render so much the more unambiguous the distinction between themselves and those genuine affections which the apostolic writers describe and exemplify."

What says Wesley himself? With due deference to the great names quoted, we respect his testimony more than theirs: first, because he was, in sobriety of feeling, in depth of learning, and in clearness of judgment, at least their equal; and secondly, because his opinion was pronounced after being an eye-witness, whilst theirs is founded entirely upon the representations of others, and their own ideas of how things ought to be.

1. The cases were real, not pretended, and often ended in genuine conversion. "You deny," writes Wesley at the time, "You deny that God does now work these effects; at least, that He works them in this manner. I affirm both; because I have heard these things with my own ears, and have seen them with my own eyes. I have seen very many persons changed, in

a moment, from the spirit of fear, horror, despair, to the spirit of love, joy, and peace; and from sinful desire, till then reigning over them, to the pure desire of doing the will of God. I know several persons, in whom this great change was wrought in a dream, or during a strong representation to the eye of their mind, of Christ either on the cross, or in glory. This is the fact; let any judge of it as they please."[1] 1739 Age 36

2. Why were these things permitted? Wesley says: "Perhaps it might be because of the hardness of our hearts, unready to receive anything unless we see it with our eyes and hear it with our ears, that God, in tender condescension to our weakness, suffered so many outward signs of the very time when He wrought this inward change to be continually seen and heard among us. But although they saw 'signs and wonders' (for so I must term them), yet many would not believe. They could not indeed deny the facts; but they could explain them away."[2]

3. How were these extraordinary circumstances brought about? Wesley again shall answer. Five years after—when he had heard all that his enemies had to say—when such convulsive agitations no longer happened—and when he had had sufficient time to test the genuineness of these remarkable Bristol and Kingswood conversions, and to form a calm judgment upon the whole, he wrote as follows:—"The *extraordinary* circumstances that attended the conviction or repentance of the people may be easily accounted for, either on principles of reason or Scripture. First, on principles of reason. For how easy is it to suppose, that a strong, lively, and sudden apprehension of the heinousness of sin, the wrath of God, and the bitter pains of eternal death, should affect the body as well as the soul, during the present laws of vital union;—should interrupt or disturb the ordinary circulations, and put nature out of its course? Yea, we may question, whether, while this union subsists, it be possible for the mind to be affected, in so violent a degree, without some or other of those bodily symptoms following. Secondly, it is likewise easy to account for these things on principles of Scripture. For when we take a view of them in this light, we are to add

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. i., p. 184. [2] Ibid.

1739 Age 36 to the consideration of natural causes the agency of those spirits who still excel in strength, and, as far as they have leave from God, will not fail to torment whom they cannot destroy; *to tear* those that *are coming* to Christ. It is also remarkable that there is plain Scripture precedent of every symptom which has lately appeared."[1]

We have nothing more to add. Perhaps the reader will think that more has been said than the thing deserved. We demur to that opinion. The phenomena recorded are among the most remarkable in church history; they are curious and mysterious; they have given rise to endless critiques, both friendly and otherwise, and, for such reasons, merit the space we have devoted to them. Dr. Hales' doctrine of "the sympathetic nature of all violent emotions," though true, is not sufficient to account for many of the instances related. Southey's opinion is flippant, and is based upon false assumptions. Watson's is of great importance, and, as contained at greater length in his Life of Wesley, is the most elaborate discussion of the subject that has yet been written. Isaac Taylor's, to some extent, coincides with Wesley's; which, upon the whole, is the clearest, fullest, and the best.

Other events, belonging to the year 1739, must now be noticed.

Kingswood, so often mentioned, was formerly a royal chase, containing between three and four thousand acres; but, previous to the rise of Methodism, it had been gradually appropriated by the several lords whose estates encircled it. The deer had disappeared, and the greater part of the wood also; coal mines had been discovered, and it was now inhabited by a race of people, as lawless as the foresters, their forefathers, but far more brutal; and differing as much from the people of the surrounding country in dialect as in appearance. They had no place of worship; for Kingswood then belonged to the parish of St. Philip, and was, at least, three miles distant from the parish church.[2] The people were famous for neither fearing God nor regarding man; and so ignorant of sacred things that they seemed but one remove

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. viii., p. 127.
[2] "Life and Times of Countess of Huntingdon," vol. ii., p. 358.

from the beasts that perish. They were utterly without desire of instruction, as well as without the means of it. The place resounded with cursing and blasphemy. It was filled with clamour and bitterness, wrath and envyings, idle diversions, drunkenness, and uncleanness;[1] a hell upon earth. Only fifteen weeks before Whitefield's first visit, the colliers had risen with clubs and firearms, and gone from pit to pit threatening the lives of all the workmen who would not join them in defeating the ends of justice, in reference to a riot that had occurred a short time previously. At White Hill, four mines were filled up; and carts, reels, and ropes belonging to others were cut and burned. The soldiers were called out, and the swarthy rioters ran away.[2] 1739 Age 36

Kingswood was Whitefield's first field-pulpit, for here, on February 17, 1739, he began his glorious career of out-door preaching. Within six weeks after this, the day before Wesley came to Bristol, Whitefield dined with the colliers, who contributed upwards of £20 towards the erection of a school. Four days after this, the miners prepared him another hospitable entertainment, after which he laid the foundation stone, knelt upon it, and offered prayer, to which the colliers said, "Amen."[3]

On the same day, Whitefield took his departure from Bristol, leaving Wesley as his successor; and, with the exception of a visit of a week's duration in the month of July following, he was not at Kingswood again during the next two years. Whitefield began the school at Kingswood: the colliers gave upwards of £20; Whitefield collected £40 in subscriptions; and, on two subsequent occasions, he made collections for the same purpose, once when he preached his farewell sermon at Bristol, on July 13, before embarking for America; and once in Moorfields, when the sum of £24 9s. was contributed.[4] This was all. The rest devolved on Wesley. He alone was responsible for the payment of the debts incurred; and, for many months, wherever he went, he begged subscriptions for the colliers' school. The school itself consisted of one large room, with four smaller ones for

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. i., p. 236. [2] *Weekly Miscellany*, Nov. 11, 1738.
[3] Whitefield's Journal. [4] Ibid.

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the teacher's residence, and was not completed till the spring of 1740.[1] The object was to teach the children of the poor, first religion, and then to read, write, and cast accounts; but Wesley also expected to have "scholars of all ages, some of them grey-headed," who were to be taught, separate from the children, "either early in the morning, or late at night," so that their work might not be hindered by their education.[2]

Within six weeks after Whitefield laid the first stone of Kingswood school, Wesley took possession of a piece of ground in the Horse Fair, Bristol, and began to build a room large enough to contain the societies of Nicholas Street and Baldwin Street. This was done without the least apprehension or design of his being personally engaged, either in the expense of the work, or in the direction of it; he having appointed eleven trustees, by whom he supposed the burdens would be borne. He soon found that he had made a great mistake. In a short time, a debt was contracted of more than £150, whereas the subscriptions of the trustees and of the two societies were not a quarter of that amount. This debt devolved upon him. He had no money, nor any human prospect or probability of procuring any; but he knew "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof," and he dared to trust Him. Besides this, Whitefield and other friends in London most strongly objected to the building being the property of trustees, on the ground that Wesley would be under their control; and, unless his preaching pleased them, they might eject him from the house he himself had built. Whitefield declared that, unless the trustship was destroyed, neither he nor his friends would contribute anything towards the expenses. Wesley yielded; the trustees were summoned; all agreed to the alteration; the deed was cancelled; and Wesley became the sole proprietor.

This, though insignificant at the time, was a matter of great importance; for, in this manner, nearly all the chapels, erected in the early part of his career, were vested in himself,—a thing involving serious responsibility, which, however, was honourably fulfilled; for trusts were afterwards created; and, by his

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. i., p. 237. [2] Ibid. vol. xiii., p. 150.

"Deed of Declaration," all his interests in his chapels were transferred to his Legal Conference. 1739 Age 36

Thus we find Wesley, with no income whatever, except the small amount arising out of his Oxford fellowship, involved in what, to a poor man, were two serious undertakings. But even this was not all the burden that he took upon himself. He spent the beginning of November in London; and whilst there, two gentlemen, then unknown to him, came again and again, urging him to preach in a place called the Foundery, near Moorfields. With much reluctance he consented. He writes:—"Sunday, November 11, I preached at eight to five or six thousand, on the spirit of bondage and the spirit of adoption; and, at five in the evening, to seven or eight thousand, in the place which had been the king's foundery for cannon."[1] He was then pressed to take the place into his own hands. He did so. The purchase-money was £115; but the place being "a vast, uncouth heap of ruins," a large sum additional to this had to be expended in needful repairs, in building two galleries for men and women hearers respectively, and in enlarging a room for the society to almost thrice its present size. To meet this large expenditure, Ball, Watkins, and other friends lent him the purchase-money; and offered to pay subscriptions, some four, some six, and some ten shillings a year towards the liquidation of the debt. In three years, these subscriptions amounted to about £480, leaving however a balance of nearly £300, for which Wesley was still responsible.[2] From this it would seem that the entire cost of the old Foundery was about £800.

This was the first Methodist meeting-house of which the metropolis could boast, and a brief description of it may not be out of place.

It stood in the locality called "Windmill Hill," now known by the name of Windmill Street, a street that runs parallel with City Road, and abuts on the north-west corner of Finsbury Square. The building was placed on the east side of the street, some sixteen or eighteen yards from Providence Row; and measured about forty yards in front, from north to

[1] Whitehead's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 125.
[2] Wesley's Works, vol. viii., p. 37.

1739 Age 36 south, and about thirty-three yards in depth, from east to west. There were two front doors, one leading to the chapel, and the other to the preacher's house, school, and bandroom. A bell was hung in a plain belfry, and was rung every morning at five o'clock for early service, and every evening at nine for family worship; as well as at sundry other times. The chapel, which would accommodate some fifteen hundred people, was without pews; but, on the ground floor, immediately before the pulpit, were about a dozen seats with back rails, appropriated to female worshippers. Under the front gallery were the free seats for women; and, under the side galleries, the free seats for men. The front gallery was used exclusively by females, and the side galleries by males. "From the beginning," says Wesley, "the men and women sat apart, as they always did in the primitive church; and none were suffered to call any place their own, but the first comers sat down first. They had no pews; and all the benches for rich and poor were of the same construction."[1]

The bandroom was behind the chapel, on the ground floor, some eighty feet long and twenty feet wide, and accommodated about three hundred persons. Here the classes met; here, in winter, the five o'clock morning service was conducted; and here were held, at two o'clock, on Wednesdays and Fridays, weekly meetings for prayer and intercession. The north end of the room was used for a school, and was fitted up with desks; and at the south end was "The Book Room" for the sale of Wesley's publications.

Over the bandroom were apartments for Wesley, in which his mother died;[2] and, at the end of the chapel was a dwelling house for his domestics and assistant preachers; while attached to the whole was a small building used as a coach-house and stable.[3]

Why was the building called the Foundery? Because, for a number of years, it was used by the government in casting

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 245. Wesley evidently thought, that all are, or ought to be, equal in the house of God. His arrangements for the Foundery congregation were carried out in the whole of his London chapels until four years before his death, when, greatly to his annoyance, the lay authorities at City Road set aside his policy.

[2] *Watchman*, 1838, p. 401.

[3] Jobson's "Chapel and School Architecture," p. 48.

cannon. When Wesley bought it, the edifice had been a ruin for about twenty years. In 1716, whilst recasting the injured guns taken from the French in the successful campaigns of Marlborough, a terrible explosion blew off the roof, shook the building, killed several of the workmen, burnt others, and broke the limbs of not a few. This led to an abandonment of the place, and the removal of the royal foundery to Woolwich.[1] The next occupants were Wesley and the Methodists; and the echoes of prayer and praise succeeded the clang of anvils and the roar of furnaces of fire. 1739 Age 36

When first opened, it was described by Silas Told as "a ruinous place, with an old pantile covering," the structure to a great extent consisting of "decayed timbers," and the pulpit being made of "a few rough boards."[2] It may be interesting, to the curious reader, to add, that a few years ago, the old Foundery bell, used in calling the people to the five o'clock preaching, was still in existence, and was attached to the school at Friar's Mount, London; that, at the present moment, the old Foundery pulpit is preserved at Richmond, and is used by the Richmond students every week; and that the old Foundery chandelier is now in use in the chapel at Bowes, in Yorkshire.

This was really the cradle of London Methodism. Here Wesley began to preach at the end of 1739. The character of the services held in this rotten, pantile covered building may be learnt from Wesley's Works. Wesley began the service with a short prayer, then sung a hymn and preached (usually about half an hour), than sung a few verses of another hymn, and concluded with a prayer. His constant theme was, salvation by faith, preceded by repentance, and followed by holiness.[3] The place was rough and the people poor; but the service simple, scriptural, beautiful. No wonder, that such a priest, shut out of the elaborately wrought pulpits of the Established Church, and now cooped up within a pulpit made of "*rough* deal boards," should be powerful, popular, and triumphant.

Passing from pulpits to preachers, we must venture here to

[1] Jackson's Life of C. Wesley, vol. ii., p. 536.
[2] Life of Silas Told, p. 74. [3] *Methodist Magazine*, 1787, p. 101.

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correct an error, which, from the first, seems to have been current in the Methodist community. All Methodist historians have assumed that Thomas Maxfield was Methodism's first lay preacher; that is, the first who was allowed to expound the Scriptures without being formally ordained to that holy service. This is a mistake. Thomas Maxfield was not converted until the 21st of May, 1739; and yet, a month after this, we find John Cennick, the converted land surveyor, employed with Wesley's sanction, in preaching to the Kingswood colliers.

Methodism's first lay preacher deserves a passing notice. He has never yet had justice done him, and we regret that limited space prevents justice being rendered even here.

John Cennick was the son of Quakers, and, from infancy, was taught to pray every night and morning. At thirteen years of age, he went nine times, from Reading to London, to be apprenticed to a trade, but all to no purpose, except that he was taken on trial by a carpenter, who refused to retain his services when the time was come for his being bound. In 1735, John was convinced of sin, while walking in Cheapside, and, at once, left off song singing, card playing, and attending theatres. Sometimes he wished to go into a popish monastery, to spend his life in devout retirement. At other times, he longed to live in a cave, sleeping on fallen leaves, and feeding on forest fruits. He fasted long and often, and prayed nine times every day. He was afraid of seeing ghosts, and terribly apprehensive lest he should meet the devil. Fancying dry bread too great an indulgence for so great a sinner as himself, he began to feed on potatoes, acorns, crabs, and grass; and often wished he could live upon roots and herbs. At length, on September 6, 1737, he found peace with God, and went on his way rejoicing. Like Howel Harris, he, at once, commenced preaching; and also began to write hymns, a number of which Charles Wesley, in July, 1739, corrected for the press.

We have already seen that, in March, 1739, Wesley and Cennick met at Reading. Shortly after that, Whitefield proposed that Cennick should become the master of the school in Kingswood, whose first stone was laid in the month of May; and, on the 11th of June, off he set on foot, from

Reading to Bristol, sleeping all night in an old stable on his way. On arriving there, he found that Wesley had gone to London; but was invited to go to Kingswood to hear a young man (query, Thomas Maxfield?) read a sermon to the colliers. The place for meeting was under a sycamore tree, near the intended school. Four or five hundred colliers were assembled, but the young reader had not arrived. Cennick was requested to take his place; he reluctantly complied, preached a sermon, and says, "The Lord bore witness with my words, insomuch that many believed in that hour." Cennick preached again on the day following, and on the succeeding sabbath twice. 1739 Age 36

Meánwhile Howel Harris came; and, on the ensuing Tuesday, Wesley. How did Wesley receive the two lay preachers? Harris went to Wesley's lodgings. They fell upon their knees; and Harris writes, "He was greatly enlarged in prayer for me, and for all Wales." Full of holy feeling, the Welsh evangelist crossed the channel, and found wider doors of usefulness than ever. Cennick too was not restrained. He tells us, that many of the people desired Wesley to forbid him; but, so far from doing so, he encouraged him; and, thus encouraged, he preached constantly in Kingswood and the neighbouring villages for the next eighteen months, and sometimes supplied Wesley's place in Bristol, when he was absent, preaching in other towns.[1]

Honour to whom honour is due. We repudiate the wish to take from Maxfield a particle of fame, which of right belongs to him; but there cannot be a doubt that John Cennick was one of Wesley's lay preachers before Maxfield was. Neither is there aught contradictory to this in Wesley's writings. It is true, that Wesley, after mentioning that the first society was formed at the end of 1739, goes on to say: "After a time, a young man, Thomas Maxfield, came and desired to help me as a son in the gospel;"[2] but this is not opposed to the fact, that John Cennick had already helped him at Kingswood, Bristol, and other places. Myles thinks that it is probable, that Maxfield, Richards, and Westall were all employed by

[1] Cennick's Autobiography.
[2] Wesley's Works, vol. vii., p. 264.

1739 Age 36 Wesley in the beginning of the year 1740.[1] Perhaps so; but we have already seen that Cennick was preaching, with the approbation and encouragement of Wesley, as early as the month of June, 1739.[2]

This is not the place to pursue the footsteps of Methodism's first lay preacher. Suffice it to remark, though his career was comparatively short, in zealous and successful labour it is difficult to equal it. Cennick had his weaknesses; but, in deadness to the world, communion with God, Christian courage, and cheerful patience, he had few superiors. Despite his Calvinism and his differences with Wesley, we admire and love the man. He died in 1755.

Here then was another momentous step taken by the arch-Methodist. Wesley had been bred within a strict ecclesiastical enclosure. He was firm in his attachment to the principles and practices of the English Church, and was far from being indifferent to the prerogatives of its priests; but he was far too wise and reverent a man to say that the salvation of the human family would be too dearly purchased if promoted by a departure from church usages. Christianity, though conserved by church order, does not exist for the sake of it. As a student of church history, Wesley must have known that, again and again, unless order had given way to a higher necessity, the gospel, instead of holding on its way in its brightness and in its purity, would, long ere now, in the hands of idolizers of ancient rules, have been extinguished in the very path where it ought to have shed an unceasing flame. In no man was there a greater combination of docility and courage; and hence, when Wesley met with men like Cennick, full of fervent consciousness of the reality, power, and blessedness of Christ's religion; and employing a style, terse from intensity of feeling, and copious from the fulness of their theme,—no wonder that, instead of forbidding, he encouraged them to preach the glorious truths, which they not merely understood, but felt.

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[1] Myles's History, p. 15.

[2] The writer is aware that Wesley says, "Joseph Humphreys was the first lay preacher that assisted me in England, in the year 1738." (Wesley's Works, vol. iv., p. 473.) But this was before Wesley went to Bristol, and, doubtless, in connection with the Moravian society in Fetter Lane.

This was a startling innovation; and, doubtless, horrified the stereotyped ministries and priesthoods existing round about; but the fields were white to the harvest, and the labourers were few; and Wesley could not, durst not, forbid an increase to the staff, because the added workers had not been trained in colleges, and came not in all the priestly paraphernalia of surplices and hoods, gowns and bands. No doubt he would have preferred the employment of clerics like himself; but, in the absence of such, he was driven to adopt the measure which we think the salvation of his system, and, in some respects, its glory. 1739 Age 36

"I knew your brother well," said Robinson, the Archbishop of Armagh, when he met Charles Wesley at the Hotwells, Bristol: "I knew your brother well; I could never credit all I heard respecting him and you; but one thing in your conduct I could never account for, your employing laymen." "My Lord," said Charles, "the fault is yours and your brethren's." "How so?" asked the primate. "Because you hold your peace, and the stones cry out." "But I am told," his grace continued, "that they are unlearned men." "Some are," said the sprightly poet, "and so the dumb ass rebukes the prophet." His lordship said no more.[1]

The following letter of Whitefield has not been previously printed so fully as at present. As it was written at the time when Cennick began preaching, it may appropriately be inserted here. Its references to other matters are also deeply interesting.

"LONDON, *June* 25, 1739.

"HONOURED SIR,—I suspend my judgment of Brother Watkins' and Cennick's behaviour till I am better acquainted with the circumstances of their proceeding. I think there is a great difference between them and Howel Harris. He has offered himself thrice for holy orders; him therefore and our friends at Cambridge I shall encourage: others I cannot countenance in acting in so public a manner. The consequences of beginning to teach too soon will be exceeding bad—Brother Ingham is of my opinion.

"I hear, honoured sir, you are about to print a sermon on predestination. It shocks me to think of it; what will be the consequences but controversy? If people ask me my opinion, what shall I do? I have a critical part to act, God enable me to behave aright! Silence on both

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1822, p. 783.

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sides will be best. It is noised abroad already, that there is a division between you and me. Oh, my heart within me is grieved!

"Providence to-morrow calls me to Gloucester. If you will be pleased to come next week to London, I think, God willing, to stay a few days at Bristol. Your brother Charles goes to Oxon. I believe we shall be excommunicated soon. May the Lord enable us to stand fast in the faith; and stir up your heart to watch over the soul of, honoured sir,

"Your dutiful son and servant,
GEORGE WHITEFIELD.

"To the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, at Mrs. Grevil's,
a Grocer in Wine Street, Bristol."

We must proceed to another matter. Wesley writes:—

"In the latter end of the year 1739, eight or ten persons came to me in London, who appeared to be deeply convinced of sin, and earnestly groaning for redemption. They desired, I would spend some time with them in prayer, and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come. That we might have more time for this great work, I appointed a day when they might all come together, which, from thenceforward, they did every Thursday, in the evening. To these, and as many more as desired to join with them, (for the number increased daily,) I gave those advices, from time to time, which I judged most needful for them; and we always concluded our meeting with prayer suited to their several necessities. This was the rise of the United Society, first in London, and then in other places." [1]

In another place, he writes:—

"The first evening about twelve persons came; the next week, thirty or forty. When they were increased to about a hundred, I took down their names and places of abode, intending, as often as it was convenient, to call upon them at their houses. Thus, without any previous plan, began the Methodist Society in England,—a company of people associating together to help each other to work out their own salvation." [2]

No doubt the whole of this is strictly true; but there are other facts to be remembered.

By the preaching of the two Wesleys and of Whitefield, a large number of persons in London had been converted; and most of these had been incorporated in the Moravian bands. When Wesley went to Bristol, at the end of March, the work in London devolved, to a great extent, on his brother Charles. Disputes soon sprung up. On Easter day, Charles had a conversation with Zinzendorf "about motions, visions, and dreams, and was confirmed in his dislike to them." On

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. viii., p. 259. [2] Ibid. vol. vii., p. 404.

April 28, Whitefield preached in Islington churchyard; and, after he had done, Bowers, a Moravian, got up to speak. Charles Wesley says: "I conjured him not; but he beat me down, and followed *his impulse*." On the 16th of May, a dispute arose, in the Moravian meeting at Fetter Lane, about lay preaching. Many were zealous for it; but Whitefield and Charles Wesley declared against it. In June, another Moravian, John Shaw, "the self-ordained priest," as Charles Wesley calls him, "was brimful of proud wrath and fierceness"; and two others, Bowers and Bray, whom Whitefield designated "two grand enthusiasts," followed Charles to Blendon, "drunk with the spirit of delusion." In the Moravian society, Shaw "pleaded for his spirit of prophecy"; and charged Charles Wesley "with love of pre-eminence, and with making his proselytes twofold more the children of the devil than they were before." Many misunderstandings and offences had crept in; and Wesley came from Bristol to put things right. A humiliation meeting was held at Fetter Lane; and "we acknowledged," says Wesley, "our having grieved God by our divisions; 'one saying, I am of Paul; another, I am of Apollos'; by our leaning again to our own works, and trusting in them, instead of Christ; by our resting in those little beginnings of sanctification, which it had pleased Him to work in our souls; and, above all, by blaspheming His work among us, imputing it either to nature, to the force of imagination and animal spirits, or even to the delusion of the devil." Things seem to have proceeded more smoothly till about September, when, in the absence of the two Wesleys, "certain men crept in among them unawares, telling them, that they had deceived themselves, and had no true faith at all. 'For,' said they, 'none has any justifying faith, who has ever any doubt or fear, which you know you have; or who has not a clean heart, which you know you have not; nor will you ever have it, till you leave off running to church and sacrament, and praying, and singing, and reading either the Bible, or any other book; for you cannot use these things without trusting in them. Therefore, till you leave them off, you can never have true faith; you can never till then trust in the blood of Christ.'"[1]

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[1] Wesley's Works, vol. i., p. 76.

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This was a serious heresy; and, on November 1, Wesley hurried up to London to put a check to it. He acknowledges, that the Moravians still held the grand doctrine of justification by faith; and that the fruits of faith were "righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." He testifies, that they were free from the sins of swearing, theft, gluttony, drunkenness, and adultery; that they had no diversions but such as become saints; that they regarded not outward adorning, and were not slothful in business. He confesses, that they fed the hungry, and clothed the naked; that their discipline was scarce inferior to that of the apostolic age; and, that every one knew and kept his proper place; but, despite all this, he found them far from perfect.

On first entering the society, he found Mr. Bray "highly commending the being still before God; and speaking largely of the danger that attended the doing of outward works, and of the folly of people running about to church and sacrament."

On Sunday, November 4, the "society met at seven in the morning, and continued silent till eight." In the evening, at Fetter Lane, "some of the brethren asserted in plain terms: 1. That, till they had true faith, they ought to be still; that is, to abstain from the means of grace, the Lord's supper in particular. 2. That the ordinances are not means of grace, there being no other means than Christ."

Three days later, Wesley had a long conference with Spangenberg, who substantially avowed the same opinions. At night, the Fetter Lane society sat an hour without speaking; and then there followed a warm dispute, to prove that none ought to receive the Lord's supper till he had "the full assurance of faith." Every day Wesley met with many "who once knew in whom they had believed, but were now thrown into idle reasonings, and were filled with doubts and fears. Many had left off the means of grace, saying they must now cease from their own works, and must trust in Christ alone, that they were poor sinners, and had nothing to do but to lie at His feet."

Wesley did his utmost to correct this state of things, and then, on November 21, went back to Bristol. On his way, he came to Wycombe, where he unexpectedly met Mr. Gam-

bold and a Mr. Robson. He writes: "After much consultation and prayer, we agreed—1. To meet yearly at London on the eve of Ascension day. 2. To fix then the business to be done the ensuing year; where, when, and by whom. 3. To meet quarterly there, as many as can; viz., on the second Tuesday in July, October, and January. 4. To send a monthly account to one another, of what God hath done in each of our stations. 5. To inquire whether Messrs. Hall, Sympson, Rogers, Ingham, Hutchins, Kinchin, Stonehouse, Cennick, Oxlee, and Brown will join with us herein. 6. To consider whether there be any others of our spiritual friends, who are able and willing so to do."[1] This arrangement is important as indicative of Wesley's purpose at this early period of his history; but it was never put into execution. The rupture with the Moravians made it a dead letter. 1739 Age 36

Five weeks afterwards, he returned to London with a heavy heart. "Scarce one in ten of the Moravians retained his first love; and most of the rest were in the utmost confusion, biting and devouring one another." His soul was sick of their "sublime divinity." He had a long conversation with Molther, one of their ministers, and ascertained that the difference between them was the following:—

1. The Moravians held that there are no degrees of faith; and that no man has any degree of it, before he has the full assurance of faith, the abiding witness of the Spirit, or the clear perception that Christ dwelleth in him. Wesley dissented from this.

2. The Moravians taught that the way to attain faith is to wait for Christ, and be still: that is, not to use the means of grace; not to go to church; not to communicate; not to fast; not to use private prayer; not to read the Scriptures; not to do temporal good; nor to attempt doing spiritual good; because it was impossible for a man to use means like these without trusting in them. Wesley believed just the opposite.

3. The Moravians thought that in propagating faith, guile might be used: (1) By saying what we know will deceive the hearers, or lead them to think the thing which is not; (2) by

[1] Whitehead's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 126.

1739 Age 36 describing things a little beyond the truth, in order to their coming up to it; (3) by speaking as if we meant what we did not mean. Wesley denounced all this.

4. The Moravians believed that the fruits of their thus propagating the faith in England were: (1) Much good had been done by it; (2) many were unsettled from a false foundation; (3) many were brought into true stillness; (4) some were grounded on the true foundation, who were wrong before. Wesley, on the contrary, thought that very little good, but much hurt, had been done, by such proceedings.

This was the state of things when Wesley "began the first Methodist society in England." He was dissatisfied with his old Moravian friends, and well he might. He had been prominent in the formation of their society at Fetter Lane, on the 1st of May, 1738; but his hopes and aspirations concerning it were blighted; and hence he formed another society of his own. Moravian heresies had, in London at least, corrupted the Moravian bands; numbers were offended; these and others repaired to Wesley; Wesley took down their names, and met them every Thursday evening for spiritual advice and prayer; success followed; and the Methodist society was instituted. We must return to this subject in the next chapter.

Wesley spent most of the year 1739 in Bristol and the immediate neighbourhood; but, at different times, he rendered important service in other places. At Blackheath, he preached to twelve or fourteen thousand people; and on Kennington Common to twenty thousand. In Moorfields, he had a congregation of ten thousand. In Gloucester he preached to seven thousand;[1] and in Bath, Bradford, and elsewhere, to great multitudes. He also preached, at least once, in the mansion of Lady Huntingdon, taking a bold text for such a fashionable audience: "The cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires of other things, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful."

He also met with some adventures and incidents worth mentioning. In riding to Rose Green, his horse suddenly fell, and rolled over and over. A gentleman, at Bradford, who

[1] Whitefield's Journal.

had wished him good luck in the name of the Lord, told him that his fellow collegians at Oxford always considered him "a little crack-brained." In one instance, the pressgang came when he was in the middle of his sermon, and seized one of his hearers. While preaching in Turner's Hall, London, the floor gave way, but fortunately the vault below was filled with hogsheads of tobacco, so that the crowded congregation only sunk a foot or two, and he proceeded without further interruption. At Oxford, he was grieved to find that none now visited the workhouse and the prison, and that the Methodist little school was about to be given up. At Stanley, on a little green, he preached for two hours amid the darkness of an October night. At Newport, he addressed "the most insensible, ill behaved people" he had seen in Wales; one old man cursing and swearing incessantly, and taking up a great stone to throw at him. The people of Wales generally he found as ignorant of gospel truth as the Cherokee Indians; and asks, "What spirit is he of, who had rather these poor creatures should perish for lack of knowledge than that they should be saved, even by the exhortations of Howel Harris, or an itinerant preacher?" Words these well worth pondering; for they are added proof, that Wesley, even as early as 1739, was not opposed to the employment of lay evangelists. 1739 Age 36

The principle upon which Wesley acted was to shrink from nothing that he judged to be conducive to his being made a Christian.[1] On this ground he went to Georgia, and to Germany; and says, "I am ready to go to Abyssinia or China, or whithersoever it shall please God to call me." He was accused of being an enemy of the Church of England; but maintained that he was not. The doctrines he preached were the doctrines of the Church, as laid down in her prayers, articles, and homilies. He allows that there were five points of difference between him and many of the clergy; but he contends that *they*, not *he*, were unfaithful to the Church. The points were these:—1. Those from whom he differed spoke of justification, either as the same thing with sanctification, or as something consequent upon it. He believed it to

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. i., p. 189.

1739 Age 36 be wholly distinct from sanctification, and necessarily antecedent to it. 2. They spoke of good works as the cause of justification. He believed the death and righteousness of Christ to be the whole and sole cause of it. 3. They spoke of good works as existing previous to justification. He believed that no good work is possible, previous to justification, and therefore no good work can be a condition of it; till we are justified we are ungodly, and incapable of good works; we are justified by faith alone, faith without works, faith producing all good works, yet including none. 4. They spoke of sanctification as if it were an outward thing. He believed it to be an inward thing,—the life of God in the soul of man; a participation of the Divine nature; the mind that was in Christ. 5. They spoke of the new birth as synonymous with baptism; or, at most, a change from a vicious to a virtuous life. He believed it to be an entire change of nature, from the image of the devil, wherein we are born, to the image of God; a change from earthly and sensual to heavenly and holy affections. "There is, therefore," says he, "a wide, essential, fundamental, irreconcilable difference between us. If they speak the truth as it is in Jesus, I am found a false witness before God. But if I teach the way of God in truth, they are blind leaders of the blind."[1] He contends that he "simply described the plain, old religion of the Church of England, which was now almost everywhere spoken against, under the new name of Methodism."[2]

Wesley was a great reader; and some of the most interesting entries in his Journals are his critiques on books; but, in 1739, he seems to have been too busy preaching to have had time for reading. The only notice of this kind is the following: "1739, October 23. In riding to Bradford, I read over Mr. Law's book on the new birth. Philosophical, speculative, precarious; Behmenish, void, and vain! 'O what a fall is there!'" This is a harsh reflection upon an old friend; but, about a year and a half before, there had been the unfortunate quarrel with William Law, already mentioned. See pp. 185–8.

Up to the present, Wesley's mother had been his chief counsellor. Immediately after his conversion in May, 1738,

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. i., p. 213. [2] Ibid. p. 219.

he went to Germany, and returned to England in September. 1739
It so happened, that he and his mother had no interview until Age 36
nine months after this. Before he went to Herrnhuth, he had related to her the particulars of his conversion, for which "she heartily blessed God, who had brought him to so just a way of thinking." Meanwhile, however, she had been prejudiced against him, and had entertained "strange fears concerning him, being convinced that he had greatly erred from the faith." This was not of long continuance. Hence the following entry in Wesley's journal :—

"1739, September 3.—I talked largely with my mother, who told me that, till a short time since, she had scarce heard such a thing mentioned as the having God's Spirit bearing witness with our spirit: much less did she imagine that this was the common privilege of all true believers. 'Therefore,' said she, 'I never durst ask for it myself. But two or three weeks ago, while my son Hall was pronouncing these words, in delivering the cup to me, "The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee," the words struck through my heart, and I knew God, for Christ's sake, had forgiven me all my sins.'

"I asked whether her father (Dr. Annesley) had not the same faith; and whether she had not heard him preach it to others. She answered, he had it himself; and declared, a little before his death, that, for more than forty years, he had no darkness, no fear, no doubt at all of his being accepted in the Beloved. But that, nevertheless, she did not remember to have heard him preach, no, not once, explicitly upon it: whence she supposed he also looked upon it as the peculiar blessing of a few; not as promised to all the people of God."[1]

Ever after this, Susannah Wesley resided chiefly in London, and attended the ministry of her sons John and Charles. She heartily embraced their doctrines, and conversed with the members of their society. Hence the following from one of her letters to Charles, dated December 27, 1739:—

"Your brother, whom I shall henceforth call *Son Wesley*, since my

[1] This is true. Hence the following, taken from a sermon published by Annesley in 1661:—"There are believers of several growths in the church of God: fathers, young men, children, and babes; and as, in most families, there are more babes and children than grown men, so in the church of God there are more weak, doubting Christians, than strong ones, grown up to a full assurance. A babe may be born and yet not know it; so a man may be born again, and not be sure of it. Sometimes they think they have grounds of hope, that they shall be saved; sometimes they think they have grounds of fears, that they shall be condemned. Not knowing which might be most weighty, like a pair of balances, they are in equipoise."

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dear Sam is gone home, has just been with me, and much revived my spirits. Indeed, I have often found that he never speaks in my hearing without my receiving some spiritual benefit. But his visits are seldom and short; for which I never blame him, because I know he is well employed, and, blessed be God, hath great success in his ministry. But, my dear Charles, still I want either him or you; for, indeed, in the most literal sense, I am become a little child, and need continual succour. For these several days, I have had the conversation of many good Christians, who have refreshed, in some measure, my fainting spirits. I hope we shall shortly speak face to face. But then, alas! when you come, your brother leaves me! Yet that is the will of God, in whose blessed service you are engaged; who has hitherto blessed your labours, and preserved your persons. That He may continue so to prosper your work, and protect you both from evil, and give you strength and courage to preach the true gospel, in opposition to the united powers of evil men and evil angels, is the hearty prayer of, dear Charles,

"Your loving mother,

"SUSANNAH WESLEY."[1]

Reference is made in the above extract to the death of Samuel Wesley, which occurred on November 6, 1739, at the early age of forty-nine. Up to the very last, he was strongly opposed to the Methodist movement of his brothers. In a letter to his mother, written only seventeen days before his death, he says:—

"My brothers are now become so notorious, that the world will be curious to know when and where they were born, what schools bred at, what colleges of in Oxford, and when matriculated, what degrees they took, and where, when, and by whom ordained. I wish they may spare so much time as to vouchsafe a little of their story. For my own part, I had much rather have them picking straws within the walls, than preaching in the area of Moorfields.

"It was with exceeding concern and grief, I heard you had countenanced a spreading delusion, so far as to be one of Jack's congregation. Is it not enough that I am bereft of both my brothers, but must my mother follow too? I earnestly beseech the Almighty to preserve you from joining a schism at the close of your life, as you were unfortunately engaged in one at the beginning of it. It will cost you many a protest, should you retain your integrity, as I hope to God you will. They boast of you already as a disciple.

"They design separation. They are already forbidden all the pulpits in London; and to preach in that diocese is actual schism. In all likelihood, it will come to the same all over England, if the bishops have courage enough. They leave off the liturgy in the fields; and though Mr.

[1] Clarke's "Wesley Family," vol. ii., p. 119.

Whitefield expresses his value for it, he never once read it to his tatterdemalions on a common. Their societies are sufficient to dissolve all other societies but their own. Will any man of common sense, or spirit, suffer any domestic to be in a band, engaged to relate to five or to ten people everything, without reserve, that concerns the person's conscience, howmuchsoever it may concern the family? Ought any married persons to be there, unless husband and wife be there together? This is literally putting asunder whom God hath joined together. 1739 Age 36

"As I told Jack, I am not afraid the Church should excommunicate him (discipline is at too low an ebb), but, that he should excommunicate the Church. It is pretty near it. Holiness and good works are not so much as *conditions* of our acceptance with God. Lovefeasts are introduced, and extemporary prayers, and expositions of Scripture, which last are enough to bring in all confusion; nor is it likely they will want any miracles to support them. He only who ruleth the madness of the people can stop them from being a formed sect. Ecclesiastical censures have lost their terrors; thank fanaticism on the one hand, and atheism on the other. To talk of persecution from thence is mere insult. It is—

> "To call the bishop, Grey-beard Goff,
> And make his power as mere a scoff
> As Dagon, when his hands were off."[1]

Sixteen nights after writing the above, Samuel Wesley went to bed as well as usual. At three next morning, he was seized with illness, and, four hours afterwards, expired. John Wesley, at the time, was in London, and Charles in Bristol; but, as soon as possible, they hastened to Tiverton, where they rejoiced to hear that, several days before he went hence, God had given to their brother a calm and full assurance of his interest in Christ.

In reviewing the events of the year 1739, it only remains to notice Wesley's publications. These were the following:— 1739

1. "An Abstract of the Life and Death of Mr. Thomas Halyburton. With recommendatory Epistle by George Whitefield, and Preface by John Wesley." Oswald: London. 1739.

Halyburton was a Scotchman, and was born in 1674. At the age of twenty-six, he became a Presbyterian minister. Ten years afterwards, he was appointed Professor of Divinity in the college of St. Andrews; but almost immediately was seized with pleurisy, and died in the thirty-seventh year of his age.

Wesley's preface is dated "London, February 9, 1739,"

[1] Priestley's Letters, p. 108.

1739 Age 36 and the book was published within a few weeks afterwards; for Wesley's brother Samuel, in a letter bearing date, April 16, 1739, says: "I have got your abridgment of Halyburton; and, if it please God to allow me life and strength, I shall demonstrate that the Scot as little deserves preference to all Christians, as the book to all writings but those you mention. There are two flagrant falsehoods in the very first chapter. But your eyes are so fixed upon one point, that you overlook everything else. You overshoot, but Whitefield raves."[1]

Wesley's abridged Life of Halyburton is a beautifully written, and most edifying book. Why did Wesley publish it? There can be but little doubt that his chief reasons were:—1. Because it contains a living exemplification of real religion. And 2. Because Halyburton's struggles, doubts, fears, and general experience, previous to his finding peace with God, through faith in Christ, bear a striking resemblance to the case of Wesley himself. After describing that the kingdom of God, within us, is holiness and happiness, and that the way of attaining it is a true and living faith, Wesley, in his preface, says: "This work of God in the soul of man is so described in the following treatise, as I have not seen it in any other, either ancient or modern, in our own or any other language; so that I cannot but value it, next to the holy Scripture, above any other human composition, except only the 'Christian's Pattern,' and the small remains of Clemens Romanus, Polycarp, and Ignatius."

In the same preface, Wesley propounds thus early a doctrine, which afterwards held a conspicuous place in the system of truth he taught. In answering the objection, that "the gospel covenant does not promise entire freedom from sin," he writes: "What do you mean by the word sin? Do you mean those numberless weaknesses and follies, sometimes improperly termed sins of infirmity? If so, we shall not put off these but with our bodies. But if you mean, it does not promise entire freedom from sin, in its proper sense, or from committing it, this is by no means true, unless the Scripture be false. Though it is possible a man may be a child of God,

[1] Priestley's Letters, p. 96.

who is not fully freed from sin, it does not follow that freedom from sin is impossible; or that it is not to be expected by all. It is described by the Holy Ghost as the common privilege of all." 1739 Age 36

2. Another of Wesley's publications, in 1739, was entitled: "Nicodemus; or, a Treatise on the Fear of Man. From the German of Augustus Herman Francke. Abridged by John Wesley." Bristol: S. and F. Farley. 1739.

The subject of the treatise was peculiarly adapted to Wesley's present position; and the whole is written in his best, nervous, clear, classic style.

3. Wesley's third publication was two treatises of ninety-nine pages, 12mo; the first on Justification by Faith only; the second on the Sinfulness of Man's Natural Will, and his utter inability to do works acceptable to God until he be justified and born again of the Spirit of God: by Dr. Barnes. "With Preface, containing some account of the author, extracted from the Book of Martyrs. By John Wesley."

This was another book congenial to Wesley's present feelings; inasmuch as it was full of the great doctrine, which was now the theme of his daily ministry.

4. Towards the end of 1739,[1] Wesley published his tract, entitled "The Character of a Methodist." He states, that the name of Methodists is not one which they have taken to themselves, but one fixed upon them by way of reproach, without their approbation or consent. The tract was written at the urgent request of numbers of people, who were anxious to know what were "the principles, practice, and distinguishing marks of the sect which was everywhere spoken against." The distinguishing marks of a Methodist are, not his opinions, though the Methodists are fundamentally distinguished from Jews, Turks, and infidels; from Papists; and from Socinians and Arians: neither are the marks of a Methodist "words or phrases:" nor "actions, customs, or usages of an indifferent nature:" nor the laying of the whole stress of religion on any single part of it. "A Methodist is one who has the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him; one who loves the Lord his God with all his heart,

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xi., p. 355.

1739 Age 36 and with all his soul, and with all his mind, and with all his strength. He rejoices evermore, prays without ceasing, and in everything gives thanks. His heart is full of love to all mankind, and is purified from envy, malice, wrath, and every unkind or malign affection. His own desire, and the one design of his life is not to do his own will, but the will of Him that sent him. He keeps not only some, or most of God's commandments, but all, from the least to the greatest. He follows not the customs of the world; for vice does not lose its nature through its becoming fashionable. He fares not sumptuously every day. He cannot lay up treasures upon earth any more than he can take fire into his bosom. He cannot adorn himself, on any pretence, with gold or costly apparel. He cannot join in any diversion that has the least tendency to vice. He cannot speak evil of his neighbour, no more than he can tell a lie. He cannot utter unkind, or idle words. No corrupt communication ever comes out of his mouth. He does good unto all men; unto neighbours and strangers, friends and enemies." "These," says Wesley, "are the principles and practices of our sect; these are the marks of a true Methodist. By these alone do Methodists desire to be distinguished from other men."

Such were Methodists when Methodism was first founded in 1739. No wonder God was with them, and honoured them with such success. Is John Wesley's Character of a Methodist descriptive of all the Methodists living now? Would to God it were!

5. Another of Wesley's publications, in 1739, was entitled: "Hymns and Sacred Poems. Published by John Wesley, M.A., Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford; and Charles Wesley, M.A., Student of Christ Church, Oxford." London: 12mo, pages 223.

As this book has recently been reprinted by the Methodist Conference Office, ("Wesley Poetry," vol. i.,) a detailed description of its contents is not necessary. Suffice it to remark, that, besides the productions of his brother, the volume contains at least twenty translations from the German by Wesley himself, and that these are among the finest hymns the Methodists ever sing. In fact, with a few exceptions, the hymns of the two Wesleys are the only productions in the

book worth having. Many are devout but literary rubbish, and utterly unworthy of being used in public worship. Some of the poems are passable; a few are beautiful; but others might have been left, without any loss to the Christian public, in the limbo of oblivion. Had the publication consisted only of John and Charles Wesley's hymns, it would have been one of the choicest productions ever printed; as in other things, so in this, an admixture made it weak. 1739 Age 36

6. It may be added, that it was probably in 1739 that Wesley published an extract of his journal, from his embarking for Georgia, October 14, 1735, to his return to London, February 1, 1737; but of this we are not certain, the first edition being without date.

The substance of this has been already given, and hence we pass, at once, to the year 1740.

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THE Moravian wranglings brought Wesley to the metropolis in 1739; and, on the 3rd of January following, he left his friends, still "subverting one another's souls by idle controversies and strife of words;" and came to Bristol on January 9.

Here he purposed to remain; but within a month he was back to London. A young surgeon, of the name of Snowde, had met in Bristol a man of the name of Ramsey, who in a state of destitution and distress had applied to Wesley for relief. Wesley employed him in writing and in keeping accounts for him, and afterwards in teaching a school instituted by the Bristol society.[1] Ramsey brought the young surgeon to hear Wesley preach. Both were rascals, and availed themselves of an opportunity of stealing £30 that had been collected towards building Kingswood school. Snowde went off to London; fell in with his old acquaintance; committed highway robbery; was arrested, tried, and condemned to die. While in Newgate, awaiting the execution of his sentence, he wrote to a friend, adjuring Wesley, "by the living God," to come and see him before his death. Wesley, who had been robbed so sacrilegiously, started off, on a journey of more than two hundred miles, purposely to visit the convict thief. He found him apparently penitent, and having only a week to live. On the day before his sentence was to be executed, the poor creature wrote:—"I trust God has forgiven me all my sins, washing them away in the blood of the Lamb." Next morning a reprieve was sent, and, six weeks afterwards, he was ordered for transportation. Whether Wesley assisted in obtaining the commutation of his sentence we have no means of knowing;[2] but as soon as

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. i., p. 331.

[2] Robert Ramsey did not long escape the hand of justice. About the Christmas of the year following, he was arrested for another crime, tried

the affair was settled he returned to Bristol; where, with the exception of a brief interval of about a week's duration, he continued until the month of June. The rest of the year, excepting about three weeks, was spent in London. 1740 Age 37

In Bristol, the work, in its outward aspects, was greatly altered. Wesley writes:—"Convictions sink deeper and deeper; love and joy are more calm, even, and steady."

Still there were a few instances similar to those that had occurred in the previous year. On January 13, while he was administering the sacrament at the house of a sick person in Kingswood, a woman "sunk down as dead." A week after, she was "filled with the love of God, and with all peace and joy in believing." On January 24, after he had preached in Bristol, another woman caught hold of him, crying:—"I have sinned beyond forgiveness. I have been cursing you in my heart, and blaspheming God. I am damned; I know it; I feel it; I am in hell; I have hell in my heart." On April 3, the congregations in Bristol were remarkably visited; and "the cries of desire, joy, and love were on every side." Five weeks after, another phase of excitement was presented. The people began to laugh; and, though it was a great grief to them, the laughing spirit was stronger than they were able to resist. One woman, who was known to be no dissembler, "sometimes laughed till she was almost strangled; then she broke out into cursing and blaspheming; then stamped and struggled with incredible strength, so that four or five could scarce hold her; then cried out, 'O eternity, eternity! O that I had no soul! O that I had never been born!' At last, she faintly called on Christ to help her," and her excitement ceased. Most of the society were convinced, that those who laughed had no power to help it; but there were two exceptions: Elizabeth B—— and Anne H——. At length, says Wesley, "God suffered Satan to teach them better. Both of them were suddenly seized in the same manner as the rest, and laughed whether they would or no, almost

and condemned to die; and on January 14, 1741, with eleven other malefactors, was executed at Tyburn. While lying under sentence of death in Newgate prison, he requested Wesley to visit him; and twice his old master went, but was refused admittance. (*London Magazine*, 1742, p. 47; and Wesley's Works, vol. i., p. 331.)

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without ceasing. Thus they continued for two days, a spectacle to all; and were then, upon prayer made for them, delivered in a moment."

What are we to think of this? Wesley attributes it to Satan, and, in confirmation of his opinion, recites an instance which had occurred in his own history while at Oxford. According to their custom on Sundays, he and his brother Charles were walking in the meadows, singing psalms, when all at once Charles burst into a loud fit of laughter. Wesley writes:—"I asked him if he was distracted; and began to be angry. But presently I began to laugh as loud as he; nor could we possibly refrain, though we were ready to tear ourselves in pieces. We were forced to go home without singing another line."

Amidst all this, however, there were happy deaths at Bristol. Margaret Thomas died in the highest triumph of faith, her will swallowed up in the will of God, and her hope full of immortality.[1] And one of the Kingswood converts "longed to be dissolved and to be with Christ;" some of her last words being, "I know His arms are round me; for His arms are like the rainbow, they go round heaven and earth." These were among the first Methodists that entered heaven; and, no doubt, it was deaths like theirs which prompted not a few of the triumphant funereal hymns that gushed so exultingly from the poetic soul of Wesley's brother.

The New Room at Bristol, as the first Methodist meeting-house was called, was now opened. Wesley expounded and preached daily, choosing for exposition the Acts of the Apostles, and for sermons the greatest texts of the New Testament. He was also one of the most active of philanthropists. The severity of the frost in January threw hundreds out of work, and reduced them to a state bordering on starvation; but Wesley made collections, and fed a hundred, and sometimes a hundred and fifty, hungry wretches in a day. He visited Bristol Bridewell, and tried to benefit and to comfort poor prisoners, till the commanding officer gave strict orders that neither Wesley nor any of his followers should in future be admitted, because he and they were all

[1] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. i., p. 251.

atheists. Of these same Bristol "atheists," Wesley himself writes, "They were indeed as little children, not artful, not wise in their own eyes, not doting on controversy and strife of words; but truly determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." Such they were when Wesley left them at the beginning of the month of June; and such his brother found them. "O what simplicity," remarks Charles Wesley, "is in this childlike people! O that our London brethren would come to school at Kingswood! These *are* what they *pretend* to be. God knows their poverty; but they are rich."[1] 1740 Age 37

Unfortunately broils generally broke out where Charles was pastor. This was his affliction, if not his fault. Before June was ended, he began to "rebuke sharply" some who thought themselves elect. He also read his journal to the bands "as an antidote to stillness." When some of the people cried out, he "bade them to be quiet." He reproved Hannah Barrow before the assembled society at Kingswood; and exercised discipline upon others. All this might be proper and expedient; but it was evidently of little use; for, when his brother returned to Bristol on September 1, his first sermon was addressed to backsliders. He met with one who had become wise far above what is written; and another who had been lifted up with the abundance of joy God had given her, and had fallen into blasphemies and vain imaginations. Later in the year, he found many "lame and turned out of the way." There were "jealousies and misunderstandings." There had been a Kingswood riot, on account of the dearness of corn. Charles Wesley rushed into the midst of it, and, finding a number of his converted colliers, who had been forced to join the disturbers of the public peace, he "gleaned a few from every company," and "marched with them singing to the school," where they held a two hours' prayer-meeting, that God would chain the lion. He had to warn the people against apostasy. Some could not refrain from railing. John Cennick, in December, told Wesley that he was not able to agree with him, because he failed to preach the truth respecting election. The predestinarians formed themselves into a

[1] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. i., p. 242.

1740 party, "to have a church within themselves, and to give
Age 37 themselves the sacrament in bread and water."[1] So that when Wesley, on December 26, went to Kingswood, in order to preach at the usual hour, there was not more than half-a-dozen of the Kingswood people to hear him, all the others having become the followers of Calvinistic Cennick.

There were other troubles in Bristol, in 1740. After several disturbances in the month of March, the mob, on the 1st of April, filled the street and court and alleys round the place where Wesley was expounding, and shouted, cursed, and swore most fearfully. A number of the rioters were arrested; and, within a fortnight, one of them had hanged himself; a second was seized with serious illness, and sent to desire Wesley's prayers; and a third came to him, confessing that he had been hired and made drunk to create disturbance, but, on coming to the place, found himself deprived of speech and power.

Concurrent with this unpleasantness, other parties used their utmost endeavours to prejudice the mind of Howel Harris, gleaning up idle stories concerning Wesley, and retailing them in Wales. "And yet these," says Wesley, "are good Christians! these whisperers, talebearers, backbiters, evil speakers! Just such Christians as murderers or adulterers!" The curate of Penreul averred, upon his personal knowledge, that Wesley was a papist. Another man, a popish priest named Beon, while Wesley was preaching in Bristol, cried out, "Thou art a hypocrite, a devil, an enemy to the Church. This is false doctrine. It is not the doctrine of the Church. It is damnable doctrine. It is the doctrine of devils." At Upton, the bells were rung to drown his voice. At Temple church, the converted colliers, and even Wesley's brother Charles, were repelled from the sacramental table, and threatened with arrest. William Seward, the friend and travelling companion of George Whitefield, came to Bristol, and renounced the friendship of the two Wesleys, "in bitter words of hatred;" and Mr. Tucker preached against them, and condemned their irregularities in reforming and converting men.

So much respecting Bristol: let us turn to London. For

[1] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. i., p. 264.

the first five months, in 1740, Charles Wesley was the pastor of the London Moravians and Methodists, but conjoined with him was Philip Henry Molther, who was the Moravian favourite. 1740 Age 37

Molther was a native of Alsace, and a divinity student in the university of Jena. In 1737, he became the private tutor of Zinzendorf's only son, and instructed him in French and music. On the 18th of October, 1739, he arrived in London, on his way to Pennsylvania. Bohler had left England; and the society in Fetter Lane was under the care of the two Wesleys.[1] Being an ordained Moravian minister, the people were anxious to hear Molther preach. At first, he spoke to them in Latin, with the help of an interpreter; but shortly was able to make himself understood in English. He was not satisfied with the Fetter Lane Moravians, for, says he, they had "adopted many most extraordinary usages." The first time he entered their meeting, he was alarmed and almost terror stricken at "their sighing and groaning, their whining and howling, which strange proceeding they called the demonstration of the Spirit of power." Molther, however, soon became extremely popular. Not only was the meeting-house in Fetter Lane filled with hearers, but the courtyard as well. Within a fortnight after his arrival, Wesley came from Bristol, "and the first person he met with was one whom he had left strong in faith, and zealous of good works; but who now told him, that Molther had fully convinced her she never had any faith at all, and had advised her, till she received faith, to be still, ceasing from outward works." This was on November 1; and what followed, to the end of 1739, has been related already.

In January, 1740, Molther requested Wesley to furnish him with a translation of a German hymn; and the magnificent one beginning, "Now I have found the ground wherein," was the result. For this, Molther, in a letter dated January 25, 1740, thanks the translator, and says, "I like it better than any other hymn I have seen in English." He then adds:—

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I love you with a real love in the wounds of my Redeemer; and whenever I remember England, and the labourers in the kingdom of our Saviour therein, you come in my mind; and I can

[1] Hutton's Memoirs, p. 50.

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but pray our Lord, that He may open to you the hidden treasures of the mysteries of the gospel, which, as I have seen by two of your discourses, you want to know and to experience a little more in its depths. It is a blessed thing to preach out of that fulness, and by experimental notions of the blood of Christ. If you seek for this as an empty, poor sinner, it undoubtedly will be given you, because it is only for such; and when we cannot reach it with our desires, we may surely believe that our hearts are not empty vessels. This is a very great and important thing, and a mystery as well as all other things, unless the Lord hath revealed them unto us. I wish that our Saviour, for His own sake, may give you an entire satisfaction in this matter, and fill up your heart with a solid knowledge of His bloody atonement. My love to your brother Charles and all your brethren. I am your affectionate and unworthy brother,

"P. H. MOLTHER."[1]

From this vague and misty epistle, it is evident that the views of Molther were not entertained by Wesley. For this we are thankful. Who can tell what is meant by loving a man "in the wounds of the Redeemer"? and by having the heart filled "up with a solid knowledge of His bloody atonement"? With all his imperfections, Wesley had learned to express his ideas in language much preferable to this.

Molther remained in the metropolis till about September, 1740, when, instead of proceeding to Pennsylvania as he intended, he was recalled to Germany. During this ten months' residence, his diligence was exemplary, but its results disastrous. In the daytime, he visited from house to house. At nights, he met the bands, and often preached. James Hutton, in a letter to Zinzendorf, dated March 14, 1740, writes:—

"MOST BELOVED BISHOP AND BROTHER,—

"My heart is poor, and I feel continually, that the blood of Christ will be a great gift, when I can obtain it to overstream my heart.

"At London, Molther preaches four times a week in English to great numbers; and, from morning till night, he is engaged in conversing with the souls, and labouring to bring them into better order. They get a great confidence towards him, and many of them began to be in great sorrow when they expected him to be about to go away. I humbly beg you would leave him with us, some time longer at the least. He continues very simple, and improves exceedingly in the English language. The souls are exceedingly thirsty, and hang on his words. He has had many blessings. The false foundation many had made has been discovered, and now speedily the one only foundation, Christ Jesus, will be laid in many souls.

[1] Original letter, published in *Wesleyan Times.*

"John Wesley, being resolved to *do* all things himself, and having told many souls that they were justified, who have since discovered themselves to be otherwise, and having mixed the works of the law with the gospel as *means* of grace, is at enmity against the Brethren. Envy is not extinct in him. His heroes falling every day almost into poor sinners, frightens him; but, at London, the spirit of the Brethren prevails against him. In a conference lately, where he was speaking that souls ought to go to church as often as they could, I besought him to be easy and not disturb himself, and I would go to church as often as he would meet me there; but he would not insist on it. He seeks occasion against the Brethren, but I hope he will find none in us. I desired him simply to keep to his office in the body of Christ, *i.e.* to awaken souls in preaching, but not to pretend to lead them to Christ. But he will have the glory of doing all things. I fear, by-and-by, he will be an open enemy of Christ and His church. His brother Charles is coming to London, determined to oppose all such as shall not use the means of grace, after his sense of them. I am determined to be still. I will let our Saviour govern this whirlwind. Both John Wesley and Charles are dangerous snares to many young women. Several are in love with them. I wish they were married to some good sisters; though I would not give them one of mine, even if I had many. 1740 Age 37

"In Yorkshire, Ingham and W. Delamotte are united to the Brethren. Some thousand souls are awakened. They are a very simple people. Some months will be necessary to bring them into order, and Toltschig will not hurry as we Englishmen do.

"At Oxford, some good souls at first could not be reconciled with lay teaching, stillness, etc.; but now some will come to Christ. About six are in a fine way. Fifty, or thereabouts, come to hear Viney three times a week, and he gets their hearts more and more. He is poor in spirit, and gradually returns to first principles.

"At Bristol, the souls are wholly under C. Wesley, who leads them into many things, which they will find a difficulty to come out of; for, at present, I believe, it will not be possible to help them. First their leader must feel his heart, or the souls must find him out.

"In Wales, some thousands are stirred up. They are an exceedingly simple and honest people, but they are taught the Calvinistic scheme. However, the young man, Howel Harris, who has been the great instrument in this work, is very teachable and humble, and loves the Brethren.

"My father and mother are in the same state, or rather in a worse. My sister is much worse than ever. But, when grace can be received, they will be blessed instruments, and bring great glory to Him in whose heart's blood I desire to be washed.

"I am your poor, yet loving brother, and the congregation's child,

"JAMES HUTTON."[1]

[1] Hutton's Memoirs, p. 48.

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This is a long, loose letter; but important, as descriptive of the Wesleys and of the work of God in general, from the standpoint of the Moravians. They evidently thought themselves the prime, if not the only, instruments in the present great revival; and this, excepting Scotland, Wales, and Bristol, to a great extent, was true. The work they had already done and contemplated was marvellous. A curious letter, dated December, 1739, is published in Doddridge's Diary and Correspondence, vol. iii., p. 265, in which Zinzendorf addresses Doddridge as "the very reverend man, much beloved in the bowels of the blessed Redeemer, pastor of Northampton, and vigilant theologian." Recounting the triumphs of the gospel, he tells the Northampton pastor that Switzerland has heard the truth; Greenland resounds with the gospel; thirty Caffrarians had been baptized; and a thousand negroes in the West Indies. Savannah, the Carolinas, Pennsylvania, Berbice, and Surinam were expecting fruit; ten or fifteen heathen tribes in Virginia were about to be visited; Ceylon and Lapland had both been reached; the gospel was being preached in Russia; Wallachia was succoured; Constantinople was blessed; through the whole of Germany the churches were preparing for Christ; and the Brethren were about to go to the East Indies, to Persian Magi, and to New York savages. All this had been done within the last twenty years. The Moravians, like a hive of bees, were all workers. By the grace of God, they had accomplished wonders; and yet, in London at least, through false teaching, they were in danger of being wrecked. The Wesleys tried to keep them right; but, in doing so, incurred censure instead of receiving thanks. A long extract from one of James Hutton's letters has just been given; and another must be added. He writes:—

"John Wesley, displeased at not being thought so much of as formerly, and offended with the easy way of salvation as taught by the Brethren, publicly spoke against our doctrines in his sermons, and his friends did the same. In June, 1740, he formed his Foundery society, in opposition to the one which met at Fetter Lane, and which had become a Moravian society. Many of our usual hearers consequently left us, especially the females. We asked his forgiveness, if in anything we had aggrieved him, but he continued full of wrath, accusing the Brethren that they, by dwelling exclusively on the doctrine of faith, neglected the law, and

zeal for sanctification. In short, he became our declared opponent, and the two societies of the Brethren and Methodists thenceforward were separated, and became independent of each other."[1] 1740 Age 37

This is a painful subject; and hitherto, by both Moravian and Methodist historians, has been touched with a tender hand; but men have a right to know the foibles and follies of the good and great, as well as the virtues and victories for which they have been wreathed with honour. Besides, the recent publication of the memoirs of James Hutton renders it requisite that something more should be said respecting the squabbles of 1740.

In the extracts just given, Hutton accuses Wesley of telling men that they were justified when they were not; of envy; of being at enmity against the Moravians; of being able to awaken sinners, but not to lead them to the Saviour; of being a dangerous snare to young females; and of being displeased at the decline of his popularity, and offended with the Brethren's easy method of salvation. Is all this true? Let us see. The Moravian statements have been given with the utmost honesty; let the reader take the Methodist statements on the other side.

Be it borne in mind, that Wesley was one of the original members of the Fetter Lane society, founded on the 1st of May, 1738; whereas Molther was first introduced among them in the month of October, 1739. Uneasiness and cavils sprung up immediately after Molther's arrival; and, before the year was ended, Wesley had to come twice from Bristol to try to check germinating evils, and to put wrong things right.

On New Year's day, 1740, he writes: "I endeavoured to explain to our brethren the true, Christian, scriptural stillness, by largely unfolding these words, 'Be still, and know that I am God.'" The day after, he "earnestly besought them to 'stand in the old paths.' They all seemed convinced, and cried to God to heal their backslidings." Wesley adds: "He sent forth such a spirit of peace and love, as we had not known for many months before." Next day, January 3, Wesley set out for Bristol, and returned a month afterwards. He now found his old friends pleading for "a reservedness

[1] Hutton's Memoirs.

1740 Age 37 and closeness of conversation," which perplexed him. He was told that "many of them, not content with leaving off the ordinances of God themselves, were continually troubling those that did not, and disputing with them, whether they would or no." He "expostulated with them, and besought them to refrain from perplexing the minds of those who still waited for God in the ways of His own appointment."

Thus he left them on the 3rd of March. Meanwhile, "poor perverted Mr. Simpson" declared to Charles Wesley, that no good was to be got by what he called the *means of grace*, neither was there any obligation to use them; and that most of the Brethren had cast them off. Charles, accompanied by Thomas Maxfield, called on Molther, who talked "against running after ordinances. They parted as they met, without prayer or singing; for the time for such exercises was past." Maxfield was scandalized, and Charles Wesley foresaw that a separation was unavoidable. On Easter day, when preaching at the Foundery, he appealed to the society, and asked, "Who hath bewitched you, that you should let go your Saviour, and deny you ever knew Him?" A burst of sorrow followed; but, on going to Mr. Bowers', in the evening, to meet the bands, the door was shut against him; and proceeding to Mr. Bray's, the brazier, he was threatened with expulsion from the Moravian society. The day after, at Fetter Lane, Simpson reproved him for mentioning himself in preaching, and for preaching up the ordinances. He answered, that he should not ask him, or any of the Brethren, how an ambassador of Christ should preach. He adds: "I went home, weary, wounded, bruised, and faint, through the contradiction of sinners; *poor* sinners, as they call themselves,—these heady, violent, fierce contenders for stillness. I could not bear the thought of meeting them again." Simpson said, "'No soul *can* be washed in the blood of Christ, unless it first be brought to one in whom Christ is fully formed. But there are only *two such ministers* in London, Bell and Molther.' Is not this robbing Christ of His glory, and making His creature *necessary* to Him in His peculiar work of salvation? First perish Molther, Bell, and all mankind, and sink into nothing, that Christ may be all in all. A new commandment, called '*stillness*,' has repealed all God's com-

mandments, and given a full indulgence to corrupted nature. The *still* ones rage against *me;* for my brother, they *say,* had consented to their pulling down the ordinances, and here come I, and build them up again." 1740 Age 37

During the week, Simpson called upon Charles Wesley, and "laid down his two postulatums:—1. The ordinances are not commands. 2. It is impossible to doubt after justification." In a society meeting, at the Foundery, he further stated that "no unjustified person ought to receive the sacrament; for, doing so, he ate and drank his own damnation;" and J. Bray declared, that it was "impossible for any one to be a true Christian out of the Moravian church."

Simpson wrote to Wesley wishing him to return to London; and, on April 23, he came, and found confusion worse confounded than ever. "Believers," said Simpson, "are not subject to ordinances; and unbelievers have nothing to do with them. They ought to be still; otherwise they will be unbelievers as long as they live." Wesley writes: "After a fruitless dispute of about two hours, I returned home with a heavy heart. In the evening, our society met; but it was cold, weary, heartless, dead. I found nothing of brotherly love among them now; but a harsh, dry, heavy, stupid spirit. For two hours, they looked one at another, when they looked up at all, as if one half of them was afraid of the other." "The first hour passed in dumb show; the next in trifles not worth naming."[1]

The two Wesleys went to Molther, who explicitly affirmed, that no one has any faith while he has any doubt; and that none are justified till they are sanctified. He also maintained, that, until men obtain clean hearts and are justified, they must refrain from using the means of grace, so called; but, after that, they are at perfect liberty to use them, or to use them not, as they deem expedient. They are *designed only* for believers; but are not *enjoined* even upon them.

Wesley was at his wits' end; numbers came to him every day, once full of peace and love, but now plunged into doubts and fears. Just at this juncture, his brother printed his fine hymn, of twenty-three stanzas, entitled "The Means of

[1] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. i., p. 222.

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Grace," and circulated it "as an antidote to stillness."[1] "Many," said Charles, "insist that a part of their Christian calling is liberty *from* obeying, not liberty *to* obey. 'The unjustified,' say they, 'are *to be still;* that is, not to search the Scriptures, not to pray, not to communicate, not to do good, not to endeavour, not to desire; for it is impossible to use means, without trusting in them.' Their practice is agreeable to their principles. Lazy and proud themselves, bitter and censorious towards others, they trample upon the ordinances, and despise the commands of Christ."

Wesley preached from the text, "Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die;" and "demonstrated to the society, that the ordinances are both means of grace, and commands of God."[2] It was also probably at this period that he preached his able and discriminating sermon on the same subject, and which is published in his collected works. He specifies as the chief *means of grace*:—1. Prayer. 2. Searching the Scriptures; which implies reading, hearing, and meditating thereon. 3. Receiving the Lord's supper. He allows, however, that, if these *means* are used as a kind of *commutation* for the religion they were designed to serve, it is difficult to find words to express the enormous folly and wickedness of thus keeping Christianity out of the heart by the very means which were ordained to bring it in. All outward means whatever, if separate from the Spirit of God, cannot profit the man using them. They possess no intrinsic power; and God is equally able to work by any, or by none at all. Wesley then proceeds to prove from Scripture, that, "all who desire the grace of God are to wait for it in the means which He hath ordained; in using, not in laying them aside." He likewise answers the following objections:—1. You cannot use these means without *trusting* in them. 2. This is seeking salvation by works. 3. Christ is the only means of grace. 4. The Scripture directs us to *wait* for salvation. 5. God has appointed another way—"Stand *still*, and see the salvation of God." Finally, Wesley concludes thus:—"1. Retain a lively

[1] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. i., p. 221. Hymn 92, in the Methodist Hymn-book, is an abridgment of it.

[2] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. i., p. 222.

sense that God is above all means, and can convey His grace, either in or out of any of the means which He hath appointed. 2. Be deeply impressed with the fact, that there is no *power nor merit* in any of the means. The *opus operatum*, the mere work done, profiteth nothing. Do it because God bids it. 3. In and through every outward thing, seek God alone, looking singly to the *power* of His Spirit, and the *merits* of His Son." The whole sermon is intensely *Wesleyan;* full of keenly defined and powerfully enforced Scripture truths. Let the reader read it: it will benefit both his head and heart; and, perused in the light of these painful facts, it possesses historic interest of great importance. Such a sermon must have had a powerful influence at such a time, and bold was the man, who, in the midst of such disputers, had the fidelity to preach it. 1740 Age 37

It was a time of great anxiety. The work in London was in danger of being wrecked; and, more than that, some of Wesley's oldest and most trusted friends, in this afflictive emergency, proved unfaithful.

The Rev. George Stonehouse, vicar of Islington, was converted in 1738, chiefly through the instrumentality of Charles Wesley, who, for a time, officiated as his curate. Many were the warm-hearted meetings, held, by the first Methodists, in the vicar's house. His affection for the two Wesleys was great; and, in November 1738, when they were forsaken by all their friends, and well-nigh penniless, he offered to find them home and maintenance; and yet, six months afterwards, he yielded to his churchwardens, and allowed Charles Wesley to be excluded from his church. Imbibing Molther's heresies, Stonehouse sold his living, married the only daughter of Sir John Crispe, joined the Moravians, and retired to Sherborne, in the west of England, where he fitted up a place capable of accommodating five hundred people, in which to hold Moravian meetings. In 1745, he had a lovefeast, the room being grandly illuminated with thirty-seven candles adorned with flowers; and all the sisters present being dressed in German fashion. Shortly after this, he abandoned the Brethren altogether,[1] and appears henceforth to have spent his days in

[1] See Hutton's Memoirs.

1740 Age 37 inglorious *stillness*, enjoying the benefits of a *quiet* religion and a harmless life.[1]

Wesley sought counsel of his friend Ingham, and received in reply the following letter, full of piety and mistiness, and now for the first time published.

"OSSET, *February* 20, 1740.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—You ask, what are the marks of a person that is justified, but not sealed?

"I cannot give you any certain, infallible marks. One to whom the Lord has given the gift of discerning could tell; but without that gift none else can know surely. However, it may be said, that justified persons are meek, simple, and childlike; they have doubts and fears; they are in a wilderness state; and, in this state, they are to be kept *still and quiet*, to search more deeply into their hearts, so that they may become more and more humble. They are likewise to depend wholly upon Christ; and to be kept from confusion; for, if they come into confusion, they receive inconceivable damage.

"On the other hand, if they continue meek, gentle, still,—if they search into their hearts, and depend on Christ, they will find their hearts to be sweetly drawn after Him; they will begin to loathe and abhor sin, and to hunger and thirst after righteousness; they will get strength daily; Christ will begin to manifest Himself by degrees; the darkness will vanish, and the day-star will arise in their hearts. Thus they will go on from strength to strength, till they become strong; and then they will begin to see things clearly; and so, by degrees, they will come to have the assurance of faith.

"You ask whether, in this intermediate state, they are 'children of wrath,' or 'heirs of the promises'?

"Without doubt, they are children of God, and in a state of salvation. A child may be heir to an estate, before it can speak, or know what an estate is; so we may be heirs of heaven before we know it, or are made sure of it. However, the assurance of faith is to be sought after. It may be attained; and it will be, by all who go forward.

"We must first be deeply humble and poor in spirit. We must have a fixed and abiding sense of our own weakness and unworthiness, corruption, sin, and misery. This it is to be a *poor sinner*.

"If I were with you, I would explain things more largely; but I am a novice; I am but a beginner; a babe in Christ. If you go amongst the Brethren, they are good guides; but, after all, we must be taught of God, and have experience in our own hearts. May the Spirit of truth lead us into all truth!

"I am your poor, unworthy brother,

"Rev. John Wesley, at Mr. Bray's, Brazier, in Little Britain, London." "B. INGHAM.

[1] Jackson's Life of C. Wesley.

This is a curious letter, and will help to cast light on some of the expressions which Wesley himself had used concerning his own experience. As yet, the Methodists had much to learn. Meanwhile, Ingham and Howel Harris came to London. Charles Wesley says, the latter, in his preaching, proved himself a son of thunder and of consolation. Cavilling, however, followed. Honest, plain, undesigning James Hutton "was all tergiversation, and turned into a subtle, close, ambiguous Loyola;" while Richard Bell, watch-case maker, seemed to think, that he and Molther and another were all the church that Christ had in England. A man of the name of Ridley rendered himself famous by saying, "You may as well go to hell for praying as for thieving;" and John Browne asserted, "If we read, the devil reads with us; if we pray, he prays with us; if we go to church or sacrament, he goes with us."[1] 1740 Age 37

Ingham also, as well as Harris, "honestly withstood the deluded Brethren; contradicted their favourite errors; and constrained them to be *still*." In the Fetter Lane society, he bore a noble testimony for the ordinances of God; but the answer was, "You are blind, and speak of the things you know not." Wesley preached a series of sermons—1. On the delusion, that "weak faith is no faith." 2. On the bold affirmation, that there is but one commandment in the New Testament, namely, "to believe." 3. On the point, that Christians are subject to the ordinances of Christ. 4. On the fact, that a man may be justified without being entirely sanctified. These discourses were followed by five others, on reading the Scriptures, prayer, the Lord's supper, and good works.

The result was increased commotion. Some said, "We believers are no more bound to obey, than the subjects of the king of England are bound to obey the laws of the king of France." Bell declared that, for a man not born of God to read the Scriptures, pray, or come to the Lord's table, was deadly poison. And Wesley, after a short debate, was prohibited preaching at Fetter Lane.

This brought matters to a crisis. Wesley had done all

[1] C. Wesley's Journal.

1740 Age 37 he could to correct the growing errors; but Molther was a greater favourite than Wesley; and the man, who had founded Fetter Lane society, was now, by Moravian votes, commanded to go about his business, and to leave the pulpit to his German superiors.

The thing had become an intolerable evil; and, at all hazards, the heresies must be checked. Substantially they may be reduced to two:—1. That there are no degrees of faith; or, in other words, that there is no justifying faith where there is any doubt or fear; or, in other words (for we feel it difficult to gripe such an abortive dogma), no man believes and is justified, unless, in the full sense of the expression, he is sanctified, and is possessed of a clean heart. 2. That to search the Scriptures, to pray, or to communicate, before we have faith, is to seek salvation by works; and such works must be laid aside before faith can be received.

This is not the place to confute such errors. Suffice it to say, that, before half-a-dozen years had passed, the London Moravians dropped the very doctrines, for opposing which Wesley was expelled from preaching in Fetter Lane. Their *stillness* was declared to mean, that "man cannot attain to salvation by his own wisdom, strength, righteousness, goodness, merits, or works. When he applies for it, he must cast away all dependence upon everything of his own, and, trusting only to the mercy of God, through the merits of Christ, he must thus *quietly wait* for God's salvation."[1] This is a doctrine to which Wesley raised no objection; but it was not the doctrine of Molther, Browne, Bell, Bray, and Bowers, in 1740. Then as to the doctrine concerning degrees in faith, it is right to add, that such a dogma was never taught by the general authorities of the Moravian *church;* but it was taught by Spangenberg, Molther, Stonehouse, and other Moravians in London,[2] the result being the disastrous confusion to which we are now adverting. Indeed, it is a notable fact, that, only two months after the Fetter Lane disruption, Wesley himself clears the Moravian *church* from the aspersion, that it held such heresies. They were the spawn of foolish fanatics, who regarded themselves Moravians, but were hardly worthy

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. ii., p. 26. [2] Ibid. vol. viii., p. 401.

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of the name. On September 29, 1740, Wesley having stated what the errors were, observes:—"In flat opposition to this, I assert: (1.) That a man may have a degree of justifying faith, before he is wholly freed from all doubt and fear; and before he has, in the full, proper sense, a new, a clean heart. (2.) That a man may use the ordinances of God, the Lord's supper in particular, before he has such a faith as excludes all doubt and fear, and implies a new, a clean heart. (3.) I further assert, that I learned this, not only from the English, but also from the Moravian church; and I hereby openly and earnestly call upon that church, and upon Count Zinzendorf in particular, to correct me, and explain themselves, if I have misunderstood or misrepresented them." Wesley thus puts the blame on the right shoulders. It was not the Moravian *church*, but a few of its foolish ministers and members, at Fetter Lane, that circulated these heresies.

What was the result? If the Fetter Lane society did not exclude Wesley from their membership, they, on the 16th of July, expelled him from their pulpit; and hence, four days afterwards, he went with Mr. Seward to their lovefeast, and, at its conclusion, read a paper stating the errors into which they had fallen, and concluding thus:—"I believe these assertions to be flatly contrary to the word of God. I have warned you hereof again and again, and besought you to turn back to the 'law and the testimony.' I have borne with you long, hoping you would turn. But, as I find you more and more confirmed in the error of your ways, nothing now remains, but that I should give you up to God. You that are of the same judgment, follow me."

Without saying more, he then silently withdrew, eighteen or nineteen of the society following him.

Two days afterwards, he received a letter from one of the Brethren in Germany, advising him and his brother to deliver up the "instruction of poor souls" to the Moravians; "for you," adds the writer, "only instruct them in such errors, that they will be damned at last. St. Peter justly describes you, who 'have eyes full of adultery, and cannot cease from sin;' and take upon you to guide unstable souls, and lead them in the way of damnation."

The day following, the seceding society, numbering about

1740 Age 37 twenty-five men and fifty women, met for the first time, at the Foundery, instead of at Fetter Lane; and so the Methodist society was founded on July 23, 1740.

A fortnight later, Wesley, "a presbyter of the church of God in England," wrote a long letter "to the church of God at Herrnhuth," in which he states, that, though some of the Moravians had pronounced him "a child of the devil and a servant of corruption," yet, he was now taking the liberty of speaking freely and plainly concerning things in the Moravian church which he deemed unscriptural. He enumerates the heresies which have been so often mentioned. He tells them, that a Moravian preacher, in his public expounding, said: "As many go to hell by praying as by thieving." Another had said, "I knew a man who received a great gift while leaning over the back of a chair; but kneeling down to give God thanks, he lost it immediately through doing so." He charges the Moravians with exalting themselves and despising others, and declares, that he scarce ever heard a Moravian owning his church or himself to be wrong in anything. They spoke of their church as if it were infallible, and some of them set it up as the judge of all the earth, of all persons and of all doctrines, and maintained that there were no true Christians out of it. Like the modern Mystics, they mixed much of man's wisdom with the wisdom of God, and philosophised on almost every part of the plain religion of the Bible. They talked much against mixing nature with grace, and against mimicking the power of the Holy Ghost. They cautioned the brethren against animal joy, against natural love of one another, and against selfish love of God. "My brethren," concludes Wesley, "whether ye will hear, or whether ye will forbear, I have now delivered my own soul. And this I have chosen to do in an artless manner, that if anything should come home to your hearts, the effect might evidently flow, not from the wisdom of man, but from the power of God."

On September 1, Charles Wesley wrote to Whitefield in America, as follows:—

"The great work goes forward, maugre all the opposition of earth and hell. The most violent opposers of all are our own brethren of Fetter Lane, that were. We have gathered up between twenty and thirty from

the wreck, and transplanted them to the Foundery. The remnant has taken root downward, and borne fruit upwards. A little one is become a thousand. They grow in grace, particularly in humility, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus. Innumerable have been the devices to scatter this little flock. The roaring lion is turned a *still* lion, and makes havoc of the church by means of our spiritual brethren. They are indefatigable in bringing us off from our 'carnal ordinances,' and speak with such wisdom from beneath, that, if it were possible, they would deceive the very elect. The Quakers, they say, are exactly right; and, indeed, the principles of the one naturally lead to the other. For instance, take our poor friend Morgan. One week he and his wife were at J. Bray's, under the teaching of the *still* brethren. Soon after, he turned Quaker, and is now a celebrated preacher among them. All these things shall be for the furtherance of the gospel."[1] 1740 Age 37

Whitefield's reply to this is unknown; but on November 24 he wrote as follows to James Hutton:—

"I have lately conversed closely with Peter Bohler. Alas! we differ widely in many respects; therefore, to avoid disputations and jealousies on both sides, it is best to carry on the work of God apart. The divisions among the Brethren sometimes grieve, but do not surprise me. How can it be otherwise, when teachers do not think and speak the same things? God grant we may keep up a cordial, undissembled love towards each other, notwithstanding our different opinions. O, how I long for heaven! Surely, there will be no divisions, no strife there, except who shall sing with most affection to the Lamb that sitteth upon the throne. Dear James, there I hope to meet thee."[2]

Here, for the present, we leave the London Moravians. We say, for the present, for unfortunately we shall have to recur to them.

The year 1740 was a year of troubles. A month previous to the Fetter Lane secession, a man of the name of Acourt bitterly complained, that he had been refused admission to the society-meeting, by order of Charles Wesley, because he differed from the Wesleys in opinion. "What opinion do you mean?" asked Wesley. He answered, "That of election. I hold, a certain number is elected from eternity; and these must and shall be saved; and the rest of mankind must and shall be damned; and many of your society hold the same." Here we have another bone of contention.

Up to the time of Whitefield's visit to America, he and the

[1] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. ii., p. 167.
[2] Whitefield's Works, vol. i., p. 224.

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Wesleys had laboured in union and harmony, without entering into the discussion of particular opinions; but now, across the Atlantic, Whitefield became acquainted with a number of godly Calvinistic ministers, who recommended to him the writings of the puritan divines, which he read with great avidity, and, as a consequence, soon embraced their sentiments. Secrecy was no part of Whitefield's mental or moral nature. With the utmost frankness, he wrote to Wesley, informing him of his new opinions.[1]

Wesley was the son of parents who held the doctrines of election and reprobation in abhorrence. While at college, he had thoroughly sifted the subject for himself, and, in letters to his mother, expressed his views in the strongest language. Whitefield, on the contrary, was no theologian. His heart was one of the largest that ever throbbed in human bosom; but his logical faculties were small. When he read the Calvinistic theory, he was not conversant with the arguments against it; and hence, with his characteristic impulsiveness, he adopted a creed, which far more powerful minds than his had not been able to defend. Southey remarks, with great truthfulness, that, "at the commencement of his career, Wesley was of a pugnacious spirit, the effect of his sincerity, his ardour, and his confidence." No wonder then that these two devoted friends were soon at variance.

One of Whitefield's letters, dated June 25, 1739, has been already given. The following is another, hitherto unpublished, written a week later:—

"GLOUCESTER, *July* 2, 1739.

"HONOURED SIR,—I confess my spirit has been of late sharpened on account of some of your proceedings; my heart has been quite broken within me. I have been grieved from my soul, knowing what a dilemma I am reduced to. How shall I tell the Dissenters I do not approve of their doctrines, without wronging my own soul? How shall I tell them I do, without contradicting my honoured friend, whom I desire to love as my own soul? Lord, for Thy infinite mercy's sake, direct me so to act, as neither to injure myself nor my friend! Is it true, honoured sir, that brother Stock is excluded the society because he holds predestination? If so, is it right? Would Jesus Christ have done so? Is this to act with a catholic spirit? Is it true, honoured sir, that the house at Kingswood is intended hereafter for the brethren to dwell in, as at Herrnhuth?

[1] Benson's "Apology," p. 134.

Is this answering the primitive design of that building? Did the Moravians live together till they were obliged by persecution? Does the scheme at Islington succeed? As for brother Cennick's expounding, I know not what to say. Brother Watkin I think no way qualified for any such thing. 1740 Age 37

"Dear, honoured sir, if you have any regard for the peace of the church, keep in your sermon on predestination. But you have cast a lot. Oh! my heart, in the midst of my body, is like melted wax. The Lord direct us all! Honoured sir, indeed, I desire you all the success you can wish for. May you increase, though I decrease! I would willingly wash your feet. God is with us mightily. I have just now written to the bishop. Oh, wrestle, wrestle, honoured sir, in prayer, that not the least alienation of affection may be between you, honoured sir, and your obedient son and servant in Christ,

"GEORGE WHITEFIELD.

"To the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, at Mrs. Grevil's,
a grocer, in Wine Street, Bristol."

This was within three months from the time when Wesley, at Whitefield's request, began his career of out-door preaching at Bristol. Two months later, Whitefield was, a second time, on his way to America. Wesley wrote to him, opposing the doctrine of election, and also enforcing the doctrine, that, though Christians can never be freed from "those numberless weaknesses and follies, sometimes improperly termed sins of infirmity," yet it is the privilege of all to be saved "entirely from sin in its proper sense, and from committing it."[1]

In reply, Whitefield wrote as follows:—

"SAVANNAH, *March* 26, 1740.

"MY HONOURED FRIEND AND BROTHER,—For once hearken to a child, who is willing to wash your feet. I beseech you, by the mercies of God in Christ Jesus our Lord, if you would have my love confirmed towards you, write no more to me about misrepresentations wherein we differ. To the best of my knowledge, at present, no sin has *dominion* over me; yet I feel the strugglings of indwelling sin day by day. I can, therefore, by no means, come into your interpretation of the passage mentioned in your letter, and as explained in your preface to Mr. Halyburton. If possible, I am ten thousand times more convinced of the doctrine of *election*, and the *final* perseverance of those that are truly in Christ, than when I saw you last. You think otherwise. Why then should we dispute, when there is no probability of convincing? Will it not, in the end, destroy brotherly love, and insensibly take from us that cordial union and sweetness of soul, which I pray God may always subsist between us? How glad would the enemies of the Lord be to see us divided! How many

[1] See Wesley's Works, vol. x., p. 257; orig. edition.

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would rejoice, should I join and make a party against you! How would the cause of our common Master suffer by our raising disputes about particular points of doctrines! *Honoured sir*, let us offer salvation freely to all by the blood of Jesus; and whatever light God has communicated to us, let us freely communicate to others. I have lately read the life of Luther, and think it in nowise to his honour, that the last part of his life was so much taken up in disputing with Zuinglius and others, who, in all probability, equally loved the Lord Jesus, notwithstanding they might differ from him in other points. Let this, dear sir, be a caution to us. I hope it will to me; for, provoke me to it as much as you please, I intend not to enter the lists of controversy with you on the points wherein we differ. Only, I pray to God, that the more you *judge me*, the more I may *love you*, and learn to desire no one's approbation, but that of my Lord and Master Jesus Christ."[1]

Two months after this, Whitefield wrote again:—

"CAPE LOPEN, *May* 24, 1740.

"HONOURED SIR,—I cannot entertain prejudices against your conduct and principles any longer, without informing you. The more I examine the writings of the most experienced men, and the experiences of the most established Christians, the more I differ from your notion about not committing sin, and your denying the doctrines of election and final perseverance of the saints. I dread coming to England, unless you are resolved to oppose these truths with less warmth than when I was there last. I dread your coming over to America, because the work of God is carried on here (and that in a most glorious manner), by doctrines quite opposite to those you hold. Here are thousands of God's children, who will not be persuaded out of the privileges purchased for them by the blood of Jesus. There are many worthy experienced ministers, who would oppose your principles to the utmost. God direct me what to do! Sometimes, I think it best to stay here, where we all think and speak the same thing. The work goes on without divisions, and with more success, because all employed in it are of one mind. I write not this, honoured sir, from heat of spirit, but out of love. At present, I think you are entirely inconsistent with yourself, and, therefore, do not blame me, if I do not approve all you say. God Himself teaches my friends the doctrine of election. Sister H—— hath lately been convinced of it; and, if I mistake not, dear and honoured Mr. Wesley hereafter will be convinced also. Perhaps I may never see you again, till we meet in judgment; then, if not before, you will know, that sovereign, distinguishing, irresistible grace brought you to heaven. Then will you know, that God loved you with an everlasting love; and therefore with lovingkindness did He draw you. Honoured sir, farewell!"[2]

A fortnight later, on the 7th of June, Whitefield, writing to James Hutton, says:—

[1] Whitefield's Works, vol. i., p. 156. [2] Ibid. vol. i., p. 182.

"For Christ's sake, desire dear brother Wesley to avoid disputing with me. I think I had rather die, than see a division between us; and yet how can we walk together, if we oppose each other?"[1] 1740 Age 37

He wrote again to Wesley as follows:—

"SAVANNAH, *June* 25, 1740.

"MY HONOURED FRIEND AND BROTHER,—For Christ's sake, if possible, never speak against election in your sermons. No one can say, that I ever mentioned it in public discourses, whatever my private sentiments may be. For Christ's sake, let us not be divided amongst ourselves. Nothing will so much prevent a division as your being silent on this head. I am glad to hear, that you speak up for an attendance on the means of grace, and do not encourage persons who run, I am persuaded, before they are called. The work of God will suffer by such imprudence."[2]

On the 16th of July, Howel Harris wrote to Wesley:—

"DEAR BROTHER JOHN,—Reports are circulated that you hold *no faith* without a full and constant assurance, and, that there is no state of salvation without being wholly set at liberty in the fullest sense of perfection. It is also said, that I am carried away by the same stream, and, that many of the little ones are afraid to come near me. Letters have likewise informed me, that, the night you left London, you turned a brother out of the society, and charged all to beware of him, purely because he held the doctrine of election. My dear brother, do not act in the stiff, uncharitable spirit which you condemn in others. If you exclude him from the society and from the fraternity of the Methodists, for such a cause, you must exclude brother Whitefield, brother Seward, and myself. I hope I shall contend with my last breath and blood, that it is owing to special, distinguishing, and irresistible grace, that those that are saved are saved. O that you would not touch on this subject till God enlighten you! My dear brother, being a public person, you grieve God's people by your opposition to electing love; and many poor souls believe your doctrine simply because you hold it. All this arises from the prejudices of your education, your books, your companions, and the remains of your carnal reason. The more I write, the more I love you. I am sure you are one of God's elect, and, that you act honestly according to the light you have."[3]

On the 9th of August, Wesley addressed Whitefield as follows:—

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I thank you for yours of May the 24th. The case is quite plain. There are bigots both for predestination and against it. God is sending a message to those on either side. But neither will

[1] Whitefield's Works, vol. i., p. 185. [2] Ibid. vol. i., p. 189.
[3] *Weekly History*, No. 13: 1741.

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receive it, unless from one who is of their own opinion. Therefore, for a time, you are suffered to be of one opinion, and I of another. But when His time is come, God will do what man cannot, namely, make us both of one mind. Then persecution will flame out, and it will be seen whether we count our lives dear unto ourselves, so that we may finish our course with joy. I am, my dearest brother, ever yours,

"JOHN WESLEY."[1]

In the same month, Whitefield wrote to Wesley :—

"CHARLESTOWN, *August* 25, 1740.

'MY DEAR AND HONOURED SIR,—Give me leave, with all humility, to exhort you not to be strenuous in opposing the doctrines of election and final perseverance ; when, by your own confession, you have not the witness of the Spirit within yourself, and consequently are not a proper judge. I remember brother E—— told me one day, that he was convinced of the perseverance of saints. I told him, you were not. He replied, but 'he will be convinced when he has got the Spirit himself.' Perhaps the doctrines of election and of final perseverance have been abused ; but, notwithstanding, they are children's bread, and ought not to be withheld from them, supposing they are always mentioned with proper cautions against the abuse of them. I write not this to enter into disputation. I cannot bear the thought of opposing you ; but how can I avoid it, if you go about, as your brother Charles once said, to drive John Calvin out of Bristol. Alas ! I never read anything that Calvin wrote. My doctrines I had from Christ and His apostles. I was taught them of God ; and as God was pleased to send me out first, and to enlighten me first, so, I think, He still continues to do it. I find, there is a disputing among you about election and perfection. I pray God to put a stop to it ; for what good end will it answer? I wish I knew your principles fully. If you were to write oftener, and more frankly, it might have a better effect than silence and reserve."[2]

A month later he wrote again as follows :—

"BOSTON, *September* 25, 1740.

"HONOURED SIR,—I am sorry to hear, by many letters, that you seem to own a *sinless perfection* in this life attainable. I think I cannot answer you better, than a venerable minister in these parts answered a Quaker : 'Bring me a man that hath really arrived to this, and I will pay his expenses, let him come from where he will.' I know not what you may think, but I do not expect to say indwelling sin is destroyed in me, till I bow my head and give up the ghost. There must be some Amalekites left in the Israelites' land to keep his soul in action, to keep him humble, and to drive him continually to Jesus Christ for pardon. I know many abuse this doctrine, and perhaps wilfully indulge sin, or do not aspire after holiness, because no man is perfect in this life. But what of that? Must I assert,

[1] Whitefield's Works, vol. iv., p. 54. [2] Ibid. vol. i., p. 205.

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therefore, doctrines contrary to the gospel? God forbid! Besides, dear sir, what a fond conceit is it to cry up *perfection*, and yet cry down the doctrine of *final perseverance*. But this, and many other absurdities, you will run into, because you will not own *election*. And you will not own *election*, because you cannot own it without believing the doctrine of *reprobation*. What then is there in *reprobation* so horrid? I see no blasphemy in holding that doctrine, if rightly explained. If God might have passed by all, He may pass by some. Judge whether it is not a greater blasphemy to say, 'Christ died for souls now in hell.' Surely, dear sir, you do not believe there will be a general gaol *delivery* of damned souls hereafter. O that you would study the covenant of grace! But I have done. If you think so meanly of Bunyan and the puritan writers, I do not wonder that you think me wrong. I find your sermon has had its expected success. It has set the nation a disputing. You will have enough to do now to answer pamphlets. Two I have already seen. O that you would be more cautious in casting lots! O that you would not be too rash and precipitant! If you go on thus, honoured sir, how can I concur with you? It is impossible. I must speak what I know. About spring you may expect to see,

"Ever, ever yours in Christ,

"GEORGE WHITEFIELD."[1]

Wesley's sermon was already published. Let us look at it. It was preached at Bristol; and, in some respects, was the most important sermon that he ever issued. It led, as we shall shortly see, to the division which Whitefield so devoutly deprecates; and also to the organisation of Lady Huntingdon's Connexion, and to the founding of the Calvinistic Methodists in Wales; and, finally, culminated in the fierce controversy of 1770, and the publication of Fletcher's unequalled "Checks;" which so effectually silenced the Calvinian heresy, that its voice has scarce been heard from that time to this. Viewed in such a light, the difference between Wesley and Whitefield was really one of the greatest events in the history of Wesley and even of the religion of the age.

Wesley's sermon, entitled "Free Grace," was founded upon Romans viii. 32, and was printed as a 12mo pamphlet in twenty-four pages. Annexed to it was Charles Wesley's remarkable "Hymn on Universal Redemption," consisting of thirty-six stanzas of four lines each.[2] It is also a noteworthy

[1] Whitefield's Works, vol. i., p. 212.

[2] See "Wesley Poetry," vol. i., p. 310.

1740 Age 37 fact, that, notwithstanding its importance, it was never included by Wesley in any collected edition of his sermons; and, in his own edition of his works, it is placed among his controversial writings. There is likewise a brief address to the reader, as follows:—

"Nothing but the strongest conviction, not only that what is here advanced is 'the truth as it is in Jesus,' but also that I am indispensably obliged to declare this truth to all the world, could have induced me openly to oppose the sentiments of those whom I esteem for their works' sake; at whose feet may I be found in the day of the Lord Jesus!

"Should any believe it his duty to reply hereto, I have only one request to make,—let whatsoever you do be done in charity, in love, and in the spirit of meekness. Let your very disputing show, that you have 'put on, as the elect of God, bowels of mercies, gentleness, longsuffering,' that even according to this time it may be said, 'See how these Christians love one another.'"

Having laid down the principle that God's "free grace is free in all, and free for all," Wesley proceeds, with great acuteness, to define the doctrine of predestination; namely, "Free grace in all is not free for all, but only for those whom God hath ordained to life. The greater part of mankind God hath ordained to death; and it is not free for them. Them God hateth; and therefore, before they were born, decreed they should die eternally. And this He absolutely decreed, because it was His sovereign will. Accordingly, they are born for this, to be destroyed body and soul in hell. And they grow up under the irrevocable curse of God, without any possibility of redemption; for what grace God gives, He gives only for this, to increase, not prevent, their damnation."

Having effectually answered the objections of well meaning people, who, startled at a doctrine so spectral, say, "This is not the predestination which I hold, I hold only the election of grace," he sums up as follows:—

"Though you use softer words than some, you mean the self-same thing; and God's decree concerning the election of grace, according to your account of it, amounts to neither more nor less than what others call, 'God's decree of reprobation.' Call it therefore by whatever name you please, 'election, preterition, predestination, or reprobation,' it comes in the end to the same thing. The sense of all is plainly this,—by virtue of an eternal, unchangeable, irresistible decree of God, one part of mankind are infallibly saved, and the rest infallibly damned; it being impos-

sible that any of the former should be damned, or that any of the latter should be saved." 1740 Age 37

This presents the doctrine in all its naked, hideous deformity; but it is fair, and no Calvinian dexterity can make it otherwise.

Wesley then proceeds to state the objections to such a doctrine:—

1. It renders all preaching vain; for preaching is needless to them that are elected; for they, whether with it or without it, will infallibly be saved. And it is useless to them that are not elected; for they, whether with preaching or without, will infallibly be damned.

2. It directly tends to destroy that holiness which is the end of all the ordinances of God; for it wholly takes away those first motives to follow after holiness, so frequently proposed in Scripture, the hope of future reward and fear of punishment, the hope of heaven and fear of hell.

3. It directly tends to destroy several particular branches of holiness; for it naturally tends to inspire, or increase, a sharpness of temper, which is quite contrary to the meekness of Christ, and leads a man to treat with contempt, or coldness, those whom he supposes to be outcasts from God.

4. It tends to destroy the comfort of religion.

5. It directly tends to destroy our zeal for good works; for what avails it to relieve the wants of those who are just dropping into eternal fire!

6. It has a direct and manifest tendency to overthrow the whole Christian revelation; for it makes it unnecessary.

7. It makes the Christian revelation contradict itself; for it is grounded on such an interpretation of some texts as flatly contradicts all the other texts, and indeed the whole scope and tenour of Scripture.

8. It is full of blasphemy; for it represents our blessed Lord as a hypocrite and dissembler, in saying one thing and meaning another,—in pretending a love which He had not; it also represents the most holy God as more false, more cruel, and more unjust than the devil; for, in point of fact, it says that God has condemned millions of souls to everlasting fire for continuing in sin, which, for want of the grace He gives them not, they are unable to avoid.

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Wesley sums up the whole thus:—

"This is the blasphemy clearly contained in *the horrible decree* of predestination. And here I fix my foot. On this I join issue with every asserter of it. You represent God as worse than the devil. But you say, you will prove it by Scripture. Hold! what will you prove by Scripture? that God is worse than the devil? It cannot be. Whatever that Scripture proves, it never can prove this; whatever its true meaning be, this cannot be its true meaning. Do you ask, 'What is its true meaning then?' If I say, 'I know not,' you have gained nothing; for there are many scriptures, the true sense whereof neither you nor I shall know till death is swallowed up in victory. But this I know, better it were to say it had no sense at all, than to say it had such a sense as this."

In Whitefield's letter, already given, and dated September 25, 1740, he states that already he had seen two pamphlets published against Wesley's sermon. One of these probably was the following: "Free Grace Indeed! A Letter to the Reverend Mr. John Wesley, relating to his sermon against absolute election, published under the title of Free Grace. London: 1740. Price sixpence."

In a subsequent advertisement, Wesley writes, "Whereas a pamphlet, entitled, 'Free Grace Indeed!' has been published against this sermon, this is to inform the publisher that I cannot answer his tract till he appears to be more in earnest; for I dare not speak of 'the deep things of God' in the spirit of a prizefighter or a stageplayer."

With great respect for Wesley, we feel bound to say, that this is not worthy of him. The pamphlet referred to is before us, and is written with great ability, earnestness, and good temper. Wesley was not bound to answer it; but he had no right thus to brand it.

About the same time, another pamphlet was published, on the other side, entitled, "The Controversy concerning Freewill and Predestination; in a Letter to a Friend. Recommended to Mr. Whitefield and his followers." 8vo, pages 36. As the controversy continued, it waxed warmer. Here Whitefield is spoken of as a man of "heated imagination, and full of himself"; "very hot, very self-sufficient, and impatient of contradiction"; "dogmatical and dictatorial" in his way of speaking, and wont to finish his oracular deliverances "with his assuming air, *Dixi*."

The pamphlet concludes with a verse which contains the pith of the whole production :— 1740 Age 37

> "Why is this *wrangling world* thus *tossed* and *torn* ?
> *Free-grace*, Free-will, are both together born ;
> If God's free grace rule *in*, and *over* me,
> His will is mine, and so my will is *free*."

In the month of October, Howel Harris took up the question, and wrote to Wesley, telling him that preaching electing love brings glory to God, and benefit and consolation to the soul. He adds : "Oh, when will the time come when we shall all agree ? Till then, may the Lord enable us to bear with one another ! We must, before we can be united, be truly simple, made really humble and open to conviction, willing to give up any expression that is not scriptural, dead to our names and characters, and sweetly inclined towards each other. I hope we have, in some measure, drank of the same Spirit, that we fight the same enemies, and are under the same crown and kingdom. We travel the same narrow road, and love the same Jesus. We are soon to be before the same throne, and employed in the same work of praise to all eternity. While, then, we are on the road, and meet with so many enemies, let us love one another. And if we really carry on the same cause, let us not weaken each other's hands."[1]

In another letter, addressed to John Cennick, and dated October 27, Harris writes in less temperate language :—

"DEAR BROTHER,—Brother Seward tells me of his dividing with brother Charles Wesley. He seems clear in his conviction, that God would have him do so. I have been long waiting to see if brother John and Charles should receive further light, or be silent and not oppose election and perseverance ; but, finding no hope of this, I begin to be staggered how to act towards them. I plainly see that we preach two gospels. My dear brother, deal faithfully with brother John and Charles. If you like, you may read this letter to them. We are free in Wales from the hellish infection ; but some are tainted when they come to Bristol."[2]

In November, Whitefield wrote to Wesley as follows :—

"PHILADELPHIA, *November* 9, 1740.

"DEAR AND HONOURED SIR,—I received yours, dated March 11, this afternoon. Oh that we were of one mind ! for I am persuaded

[1] "Life and Times of Howel Harris."
[2] *Weekly History*, No. 13 : 1741.

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you greatly err. You have set a mark you will never arrive at, till you come to glory. O dear sir, many of God's children are grieved at your principles. Oh that God may give you a sight of His free, sovereign, and electing love! But no more of this. Why will you compel me to write thus? Why will you dispute? I am willing to go with you to prison, and to death; but I am not willing to oppose you. Dear, dear sir, study the covenant of grace, that you may be consistent with yourself. Oh build up, but do not lead into error, the souls once committed to the charge of your affectionate, unworthy brother and servant, in the loving Jesus,

"G. WHITEFIELD."[1]

A fortnight later, he wrote again to Wesley:—

"BOHEMIA, MARYLAND, *November* 24, 1740.

"DEAR AND HONOURED SIR,—Last night brother G—— brought me your two kind letters. Oh that there may be harmony, and very intimate union between us! Yet, it cannot be, since you hold *universal redemption*. The devil rages in London. He begins now to triumph indeed. The children of God are disunited among themselves. My dear brother, for Christ's sake, avoid all disputation. Do not oblige me to preach against you; I had rather die. Be gentle towards the ————. They will get great advantage over you, if they discover any irregular warmth in your temper. I cannot for my soul unite with the *Moravian Brethren*. Honoured sir, adieu!

"Yours eternally in Christ Jesus,

"GEORGE WHITEFIELD."[2]

Just at this time, Wesley was expounding Romans ix. at Bristol, where Calvinism was becoming rampant in the society. Charles Wesley writes: "Anne Ayling and Anne Davis could not refrain from railing. John Cennick never offered to stop them. Alas, we have set the wolf to keep the sheep! God gave me great moderation toward him, who, for many months, has been undermining our doctrine and authority."[3]

The difference was continued by Whitefield writing his "Letter to the Reverend Mr. John Wesley; in answer to his sermon, entitled 'Free Grace';" with the motto attached, "When Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed."

The "Letter" is dated, "Bethesda, in Georgia, December 24, 1740." After reiterating his reluctance to write against Wesley, he proceeds to state, that he now did so at the re-

[1] Whitefield's Works, vol. i., p. 219. [2] Ibid. vol. i., p. 225.
[3] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. i., p. 263.

quest of a great number of persons, who had been benefited by his ministry. He accuses Wesley of having propagated the doctrine of universal redemption, both in public and private, by preaching and printing, ever since before his last departure for America. He says that Wesley, while at Bristol, received a letter, charging him with not preaching the gospel, because he did not preach election. Upon this, he drew a lot; the answer was, "*preach and print;*" and, accordingly, he preached and printed against election. At Whitefield's desire, he deferred publishing the sermon until after Whitefield started for America, when he sent it out. Whitefield asserts, that, if any one wished to prove the doctrine of election and of final perseverance, he could hardly wish for a text more fit for his purpose than that (Romans viii. 32) which Wesley had chosen to disprove it. He charges him with giving an "equivocal definition of the word *grace*," and a "false definition of the word *free;*" and adds: "I frankly acknowledge, I believe the doctrine of reprobation, in this view, that God intends to give saving grace, through Jesus Christ, only to a certain number; and that the rest of mankind, after the fall of Adam, being justly left of God to continue in sin, will at last suffer that eternal death, which is its proper wages." In reply to Wesley, he argues that, because preachers know not who are elect, and who reprobate, they are bound to preach promiscuously to all; that holiness is made a mark of election by all who preach it; that the seventeenth article of the English Church asserts, that the doctrine of "predestination and election in Christ is full of unspeakable comfort to godly persons;" that dooming millions to everlasting burnings is not an act of injustice, because God, for the sin of Adam, might justly have thus doomed all; that God's absolute purpose of saving His chosen does not preclude the necessity of the gospel revelation, or the use of any of the means through which He has determined the decree shall take effect; that the doctrine of election does not make the Bible contradict itself, for though it asserts, that "the Lord is loving to every man, and His mercy is over all His works," the reference is to His *general*, not His *saving* mercy; that it is unjust to charge the doctrine of reprobation with blasphemy; and that, on the other hand,

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the doctrine of universal redemption, as set forth by Wesley, "is really the highest reproach upon the dignity of the Son of God, and the merit of His blood;" and Whitefield challenges Wesley to make good the assertion, "that Christ died for them that perish," without holding, as Peter Bohler had lately confessed in a letter, "that all the damned souls would hereafter be brought out of hell;" for "how can all be universally redeemed, if all are not finally saved?"

In conclusion, he writes:—

"Dear sir, for Jesus Christ's sake, consider how you dishonour God by denying election. You plainly make man's salvation depend not on God's *free grace*, but on man's *free will*. Dear, dear sir, give yourself to reading. Study the covenant of grace. Down with your carnal reasoning. Be a little child; and then, instead of pawning your salvation, as you have done in a late hymn-book, if the doctrine of *universal redemption* be not true; instead of talking of *sinless perfection*, as you have done in the preface to that hymn-book; and instead of making man's salvation to depend on his own *free will*, as you have in this sermon, you will compose a hymn in praise of sovereign, distinguishing love; you will caution believers against striving to work a perfection out of their own hearts, and will print another sermon the reverse of this, and entitle it 'Free Grace *Indeed*'—free, because not free to all; but free, because God may withhold or give it to whom and when He pleases."[1]

About three weeks after the date of this letter, Whitefield set sail for England, bringing his manuscript with him. On his arrival in London, in March, 1741, he submitted it to Charles Wesley, who returned it to the author, endorsed with the words: "Put up again thy sword into its place." The pamphlet, however, was published; and Whitefield gave Wesley notice, that he was resolved publicly to preach against him and his brother wherever he went. Wesley complained to Whitefield—1. That it was imprudent to publish his letter, because it was only putting weapons into the hands of those who hated them. 2. That, if he really was constrained to bear his testimony on the subject, he might have done it by issuing a treatise without ever calling Wesley's name in question. 3. That what he had published was a mere burlesque upon an answer. 4. That he had said enough, however, of what was wholly foreign to the question, to make

[1] Whitefield's Works, vol. iv., p. 72.

an open, and probably irreparable, breach between them. Wesley added:— 1740 Age 37

"You rank all the maintainers of *universal redemption* with Socinians. Alas, my brother! Do you not know even this, that Socinians allow no redemption at all? that Socinus himself speaks thus, '*Tota redemptio nostra per Christum metaphora*'? How easy were it for me to hit many other palpable blots, in what you call an answer to my sermon! And how, above measure, contemptible would you then appear to all impartial men, either of sense or learning! But, I assure you, my hand shall not be upon you. The Lord be judge between me and thee! The general tenour, both of my public and private exhortations, when I touch thereon at all, as even my enemies know, if they would testify, is 'Spare the young man, even Absalom, for my sake!'" [1]

David and Jonathan were divided. An immediate schism followed. Wesley writes:—"In March, 1741, Mr. Whitefield, being returned to England, entirely separated from Mr. Wesley and his friends, because he did not hold the decrees. Here was the first breach, which warm men persuaded Mr. Whitefield to make merely for a difference of opinion. Those who believed universal redemption had no desire to separate; but those who held particular redemption would not hear of any accommodation, being determined to have no fellowship with men that were 'in such dangerous errors.' So there were now two sorts of Methodists: those for particular, and those for general, redemption." [2]

Here, for the present, we leave the subject; and turn to other matters.

In 1740, as in 1739, the pamphlets published against Methodism were many and malignant. One was entitled: "The important Doctrines of Original Sin, Justification by Faith, and Regeneration, clearly stated and vindicated from the misrepresentations of the Methodists. By Thomas Whiston, A.B." London: 1740. Pp. 70. Mr. Whiston is unknown to fame. Wesley never noticed him; and, though his production is now before us, an analysis of its contents would weary the reader without instructing him.

Another was, "The Quakers and Methodists compared. By the Rev. Zachary Grey, LL.D., Rector of Houghton Conquest, in Bedfordshire,"—the laborious author of more

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1807, p. 6.
[2] Wesley's Works, vol. viii., p. 335.

1740 Age 37 than thirty different publications, a man of great ingenuity and research, but an acrimonious polemic, who died at Ampthill, in 1766.[1]

It is a curious fact, that Whitefield was far more violently attacked than the Wesleys were. "Aquila Smyth, a layman of the Church of England," accuses him of having published two letters against Archbishop Tillotson, "in the spirit of pride, envy, and malice;" and of having "detracted the most valuable works of other men, in order to aggrandize himself, and gain credit for his own weak, impudent, and wicked performances." His "behaviour exposes him to the scorn of every reader;" and his "consummate impudence" is unequalled in the Christian world. There "is a juggle between him and Wesley to deceive their followers, and to prevent an inquiry into their corrupt and abominable doctrine;" and, finally, after calling him "a brainsick enthusiast," Smyth declares, that Whitefield has taken up five thousand acres in America, under the pretence of educating and maintaining such negroes as may be sent to him; but really because he hopes to realise from the transaction a more plentiful fortune than he could have gained in England by five thousand years of preaching.

So much for the spleen of Aquila Smyth. In the *Weekly Miscellany*, edited by Mr. Hooker, there appeared, in several successive numbers, fictitious dialogues between Whitefield and a country clergyman, the object of which was to make Whitefield contemptible; and the whole were finished with a promise from the editor, that he would abridge, for the benefit of his subscribers, the history of the Anabaptists, and would show that there is a near resemblance between them and their descendants, the Methodists.

The Rev. Alexander Garden, the Bishop of London's commissary at Charlestown, in America, published a series of six letters on justification by faith and works, in which he accused Whitefield of "self contradiction," of "arrogant and wicked slander," and of being "so full of zeal that he had no room for charity." He contemptuously speaks of Whitefield's "apparent shuffles," "miserable distinctions," "mob harangues,"

[1] Nichols' Literary Anecdotes, vol. ii., p. 541.

and "false and poisoned insinuations." Whitefield "deceives the people, and has no talent at proving anything"; he is "a hairbrained solifidian, and runs about a mouthing"; he has "kindled a fire of slander and defamation, which no devil in hell, nor jesuit on earth, will ever make an effort to extinguish, but will fagot and foment it with all their might"; "he dispenses to the populace in a vehicle of cant terms, without sense or meaning"; and "in a mountebank way, he fancies himself a young David, and that he has slain Goliath." 1740 Age 37

Whitefield was again severely handled "by a presbyter of the Church of England," in an able pamphlet of forty-four pages, entitled "A modest and serious Defence of the Author of the Whole Duty of Man, from the false charges and gross misrepresentations of Mr. Whitefield, and the Methodists his adherents"; but this was a castigation which Whitefield merited, for his ill judged and unneeded letter, published in the *Daily Advertiser* of July 3, 1740.

The most violent attack of all was in an octavo pamphlet of eighty-five pages, with the title, "The Expounder Expounded, by R——ph J——ps——n, of the Inner Temple, Esq." London. Some parts of this disgraceful production are too filthy to be noticed; they must be passed in silence. In other parts, Whitefield, for publishing his journal, is charged with "saddling the world with one of the grossest absurdities and impositions, that folly or impudence could invent"; "his book is nothing but a continued account of his intimate union and correspondence with the devil"; and he himself may be seen "upon the hills and house-tops, like another Æolus, belching out his divine vapours to the multitude, to the great ease of himself, and emolument of his auditors." "Charles Wesley lent him books at Oxford, which threw his understanding off the hinges, and rendered him *enthusiastically* crazy"; at college he "deemed a lousy pate *humility*, foul linen was *heavenly contemplation*, woollen gloves were *grace*, a patched gown was *justification by faith*, and dirty shoes meant a *walk with God*. In short, with him, religion consisted wholly in *nastiness*, and heaven was easiest attacked from a *dunghill*." These are the mildest specimens we have been able to select from this cesspool of a perverted intellect and a polluted heart.

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Another pamphlet, published in 1740, and consisting of eighty-four pages, was entitled "The Imposture of Methodism displayed; in a letter to the inhabitants of the parish of Dewsbury. Occasioned by the rise of a certain modern sect of enthusiasts, called Methodists. By William Bowman, M.A., vicar of Dewsbury and Aldbrough in Yorkshire, and chaplain to the Right Honourable Charles, Earl of Hoptoun." As yet, neither the Wesleys nor Whitefield had been in Yorkshire; but Ingham and William Delamotte were there, and had been the means of converting a large number of the almost heathenised inhabitants of the west riding. The reverend vicar tells his parishioners, that "an impious spirit of enthusiasm and superstition has crept in among them, and threatens a total ruin of all religion and virtue." He himself has been "an eye-witness of this monstrous madness, and religious frenzy, which, like a rapid torrent, bears down everything beautiful before it, and introduces nothing but a confused and ridiculous medley of nonsense and inconsistency." It was matter of thankfulness, "that the contagion, at present, was pretty much confined to the dregs and refuse of the people,—the weak, unsteady mob, always fond of innovation, and never pleased but with variety;" but, then, the mob was so numerous in the west of Yorkshire, that the danger was greater than was apprehended. The author declines to determine whether "these modern visionaries, like the Quakers, are a sect hatched and fashioned in a seminary of Jesuits; or whether, like the German Anabaptists, they are a set of crazy, distempered fanatics;" but certain it is, that their "enthusiasm is patched and made up of a thousand incoherencies and absurdities, picked and collected from the vilest errors and most pestilent follies, of every heresy upon earth." "Their teachers inculcate, that they are Divinely and supernaturally inspired by the Holy Ghost, to declare the will of God to mankind; and, yet, they are cheats and impostors, and their pretended sanctity nothing but a trick and a delusion." They had been allowed to use the pulpits of the Church, "till, by their flights and buffooneries, they had made the church more like a bear-garden than the house of prayer; and the rostrum nothing else but the trumpet of sedition, heresy, blasphemy, and everything destructive to religion

and good manners." It was high time for the clergy to put an end to their "pulpits being let out, as a stage, for mountebanks and jack-puddings to play their tricks upon, and from thence to propagate their impostures and delusions." "These mad devotionalists held, that it is lawful and expedient for mere laymen, for women, and the meanest and most ignorant mechanics, to minister in the church of Christ, to preach, and expound the word of God, and to offer up the prayers of the congregation in the public assemblies." They also taught, that "the new birth consists in an absolute and entire freedom from all kind of sin whatsoever;" and likewise "denounced eternal death and damnation on all who cannot conform to their ridiculous ideas." "Whilst adopting to themselves the reputation of being the chief favourites of heaven, the confidants and imparters of its secrets, and the dispensers of its frowns and favours, they were really furious disciples of antichrist, reverend scavengers of scandal, and filthy pests and plagues of mankind." Such are specimens of the meek language used by the reverend vicar of Dewsbury. 1740 Age 37

We have already noticed one production of the fiery and furious Joseph Trapp, D.D., published in 1739. The publication of that produced others, in 1740. One was entitled, "The true Spirit of the Methodists, and their Allies, fully laid open; in an answer to six of the seven pamphlets, lately published against Dr. Trapp's sermons upon being 'Righteous over much'": pp. 98. The anonymous author says, that one of these six pamphlets is full of "false quotations, lies, and slanders," and concludes with "an ungodly jumble of railing and praying." The Methodists are branded as "crackbrained enthusiasts and profane hypocrites." "The criterions of modern saintship are the most unchristian malice, lying, slander, railing, and cursing." Whitefield is pronounced "impious and ignorant." The "false doctrines and blasphemies of the Methodists, their field assemblies and conventicles in houses, are contrary to the laws of God and man, of church and state, and are tending to the ruin of both."

Another pamphlet, of 127 pages, was by Dr. Trapp himself, and entitled, "A Reply to Mr. Law's earnest and serious Answer (as it is called) to Dr. Trapp's discourse on being righteous over much." The reverend doctor, as inflam-

1740 Age 37 mable as ever, pronounces the Methodists "a new sect of enthusiasts, or hypocrites, or both; whose doctrines and practices tend to the destruction of souls, are a scandal to Christianity, and expose it to the scoffs of libertines, infidels, and atheists." This is not an unfair specimen of the whole 127 pages. William Law, however, was far too stout an antagonist to be silenced by Dr. Trapp. His "Serious Answer" to Trapp's sermons, and his "Animadversions" on Trapp's reply, whilst written in the highest style of Christian courtesy, are witheringly severe. They may be found in Wesley's collected publications, edit. 1772, vol. vi.

Another doughty anti-Methodistic champion was the celebrated Dr. Daniel Waterland, chaplain in ordinary to his majesty, canon of Windsor, archdeacon of Middlesex, and vicar of Twickenham; one of the greatest controversialists of the age, who died at the end of the year of which we are writing, and whose collected works have since been published in eleven octavo volumes.

A few months before his death, Waterland preached two sermons, first at Twickenham, and next at Windsor, on regeneration, which, without mentioning the Methodists, were undeniably meant to serve as an antidote to the doctrines they preached. These he published in the form of an octavo pamphlet of fifty-six pages, accompanied by a mass of notes in Latin, Greek, and English, from all sorts of authors. The title of the pamphlet is, "Regeneration Stated and Explained, according to Scripture and Antiquity, in a Discourse on Titus iii. 4, 5, 6;" and its subject may be inferred from the following definition:—"The new birth, in the general, means a spiritual change, wrought upon any person by the Holy Spirit, in the use of baptism; whereby he is translated from his natural state in Adam, to a spiritual state in Christ." Written from such a standpoint, the pamphlet of course was a tacit condemnation of the doctrines of the Methodists. It is immensely learned, but far from luminous; full of talent, but likewise full of error; exceedingly elaborate, but, to an equal extent, bewildering.

We shall mention only one other attack on Methodism and the Methodists made at this period. This was a pamphlet of fifty-five pages, with the title, "The Trial of Mr. Whitefield's

Spirit, in some remarks upon his fourth Journal." The author makes himself merry with the discovery, that this new sect of enthusiasts, by taking to themselves the name of *Methodist*, have unintentionally stigmatised themselves with a designation which is branded in Scripture as evil. "The word *Μεθοδεια*, or Methodism, is only used twice throughout the New Testament (Ephesians iv. 14, and vi. 11), and in both places denotes that cunning craftiness whereby evil men, or evil spirits, lie in wait to deceive." It is alleged that Wesley, Whitefield, and their followers, "have taken an appellation, perhaps through a judicial inadvertence, which the Spirit of God has peculiarly appropriated to the adversary of mankind, and to those who are leagued with him in enmity to the interests of righteousness and true holiness." This was an ingenious hit; the writer, however, forgetting or misstating the fact, that the name of Methodists was not self-assumed, but imposed by others. "*Μεθοδευσαι δε εστι το απατησαι*—to be a Methodist, says St. Chrysostom, is to be beguiled." And, from this, the author wishes the inference to be deduced, that, because the new sect of enthusiasts were called Methodists, they were all beguiled, and, of course, Wesley and Whitefield were the great beguilers. The remainder of the pamphlet is a critique on Whitefield's Journals, which, it must be admitted, were unguardedly expressed, and which, before being printed, ought to have been revised by a kindred spirit, possessed of a soberer judgment than Whitefield had.

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The Methodist persecutions of 1740 were chiefly of a literary kind. It is true that Charles Wesley met with a rough reception at Bengeworth, where Henry Seward called him "a scoundrel and a rascal"; directed the mob to "take him away and duck him"; and actually seized him by the nose and wrung it. This was bad enough, but the treatment of John Cennick and his friends was even worse. While he was preaching at Upton, in Gloucestershire, the mob assembled with a horn, a drum, and a number of brass pans, and made a most horrid hubbub; the brass pans being also used in beating the people's heads. A man likewise put a cat into a cage, and brought a pack of hounds to make them bark at it. Another fellow and his wife, who kept an alehouse at

1740 Age 37 Hannam, rode through the congregation, thrashing the people with their whips, and trampling them beneath their horses' hoofs. Little children collected dust, which their upgrown patrons cast upon Cennick, who was also struck violently on the nose, and became a target at which to hurl dead dogs and stones.[1] But even violent and contemptuous treatment like this was not near so painful as the scurrilous attacks encountered through the press. In this way, the persecution of the Methodists was something more than a localised outburst of spleen and hate; for, in all sorts of squibs, they were gibbeted, and exposed to ridicule, throughout the kingdom.

Wesley's trials were not trifles; but, in the midst of all, he bravely pursued the path of duty; and, after the final separation from his foolish, fanatical friends at Fetter Lane, his labours in London were attended with considerable success. On August 11, while forty or fifty were praying and giving thanks at the Foundery, two persons began to cry to God with a loud and bitter cry, and soon found peace. Five days after, a woman, at Long Lane, fell down and continued in violent agonies for an hour. In September, a great number of men forced their way into the Foundery, and began to speak big, swelling words; but, "immediately after, the hammer of the word brake the rocks in pieces." A smuggler rushed in and cursed vehemently; but, when Wesley finished preaching, the man declared, before the congregation, that, henceforth, he would abandon smuggling and give God his heart.

Wesley's efforts to do good were various. In London, he induced his friends to contribute the clothing they could spare, and distributed it among the poor of the Foundery society. In Bristol, besides visiting numbers of people "ill of the spotted fever," he took into his Broadmead meeting-house twelve of the poorest people he could find, who were out of work; and, to save them at once from want and from idleness, employed them for four months in carding and spinning cotton.

Wesley concluded this eventful year at Bristol, by holding

[1] *Weekly History*, No. 33: Nov. 21, 1741.

a watchnight meeting, proposed by James Rogers, a Kingswood collier, noted among his neighbours for his playing on the violin, but who, being awakened under the ministry of Charles Wesley, went home, burnt his fiddle, and told his wife that he meant to be a Methodist. To his death, James was faithful, and, besides many other important services, was the first Methodist preacher that preached at Stroud in Gloucestershire.[1] 1740 Age 37

This was the first watchnight meeting among the Methodists. The people met at half-past eight; the house was filled from end to end; and "we concluded the year," says Wesley, "wrestling with God in prayer, and praising Him for the wonderful work which He had already wrought upon the earth."

The meeting soon became a favourite one, and was held monthly. Wesley writes: "Some advised me to put an end to this; but, upon weighing the thing thoroughly, and comparing it with the practice of the ancient Christians, I could see no cause to forbid it. Rather, I believed it might be made of more general use."[2] The church, in ancient times, was accustomed to spend whole nights in prayer, which nights were termed *vigiliæ*, or vigils; and, sanctioned by such authority, Wesley appointed monthly watchnights, on the Fridays nearest the full moon, desiring that they, and they only, should attend, who could do it without prejudice to their business or families.

Little more remains to be said concerning 1740. During the entire year, Wesley preached in only three churches, namely at Newbury, and at Lanhithel, and Lantarnum, in Wales. His favourite text was Ephesians ii. 8, showing that his mind and heart were still full of the glorious truth, salvation by grace through faith in Christ.

One of his publications has been already noticed. Another was a third volume of hymns, pp. 209, by no means inferior to its predecessors in poetic excellence, or Christian character. The book is also possessed of considerable historic interest, containing, as it does, a long hymn of twenty-two verses, de-

[1] Myles's History, p. 58.
[2] Wesley's Works, vol. viii., p. 246

1740 Age 37 scriptive of Charles Wesley's history up to this period; and likewise several hymns addressed to Whitefield; and one "for the Kingswood colliers." The volume consists of ninety-six hymns and poems, only four of which are selected from other authors. The preface is remarkable, giving a description of the man possessed of a clean heart. He is freed from pride, self will, evil thoughts, wandering thoughts, doubts, fears, etc. Wesley, a quarter of a century afterwards, declared that this preface contains the strongest account that he ever gave of Christian perfection; and admitted, that some of the statements needed correction; especially, that the perfect Christian is so "freed from self will as not to desire ease in pain;" that, "in prayer, he is so delivered from wanderings, that he has no thought of anything past, or absent, or to come, but of God alone," etc. Wesley never taught anything respecting Christian perfection, but what was, either directly or indirectly, contained in this preface; but some of its strong assertions he wished to modify.[1]

Another publication, issued in 1740, was entitled, "Serious Considerations concerning the Doctrines of Election and Reprobation. Extracted from a late author." 12mo, twelve pages. It is a condensed, well argued tract on what had become a bone of contention between Wesley and his friend Whitefield. The address to the reader is beautiful: "Let us bear with one another, remembering it is the prerogative of the great God to pierce through all His own infinite schemes with an unerring eye, to surround them with an all-comprehensive view, to grasp them all in one single survey, and to spread a reconciling light over all their immense varieties. Man must yet grapple with difficulties in this dusky twilight; but God, in His time, will irradiate the earth more plentifully with His light and truth."

Another of Wesley's publications was a 12mo tract of nineteen pages, with the title, "The Nature and Design of Christianity, extracted from a late author" (Mr. Law); and another was Wesley's second Journal, extending from February 1 to August 12, 1738. 12mo, pp. 90.

The year 1740, in Wesley's history, was not marked with

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xiv., p. 306; and vol. xi., p. 366.

great religious success; but it was one of the most eventful years in his chequered life. There was a full and final separation from the Moravians; there was the separate organisation of the Methodist society at Moorfields; and there was the controversy with Whitefield. All these matters will again demand attention. 1740 Age 37

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WITH the exception of a week spent in the midland counties, about a month at Oxford, and three weeks in Wales, Wesley divided the year 1741, in almost equal proportions, between London and Bristol.

Whitefield arrived in England, from America, in the month of March; and, finding his congregations at Moorfields and Kennington Common dwindled down from twenty thousand to two or three hundred, he started off to Bristol, where he remained till the end of May; when he came back to London, and, on July 25, sailed thence to Scotland, writing six-and-twenty pastoralizing letters on the way, and arriving at Leith on July 30. The next three months were spent with the Erskines and others, the leaders of the Seceders, who, in the year preceding, had been solemnly expelled by the General Assembly, and had had their relation to the national church formally dissolved. Whitefield's career of out-door preaching, and his success in Scotland, were marvellous. All the time, however, he was burdened with an enormous debt, incurred on account of his orphan house in Georgia, and was sometimes threatened with arrest. On leaving Scotland, he proceeded direct to Wales, where, on the 11th of November, he married a widow of the name of James, and set up house-keeping with borrowed furniture, though, according to an announcement in the *Gentleman's Magazine*,[1] his wife had a fortune of £10,000. The rest of the year he spent chiefly in Bristol and the west of England.[2]

Charles Wesley, of course, alternated with his brother, though he preached far more at Bristol than in London. Ever and anon he composed one of his grand funereal hymns, and not unfrequently met with amusing adventures. In a Kingswood prayer-meeting, while he and others were praying

[1] *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1741, p. 608.
[2] Philip's Life of Whitefield, p. 275.

for an increase of spiritual children, a wild collier brought four of his black-faced little ones, and threw the youngest on the table, saying, "You have got the mother, take the bairns as well." In another instance, a woman came to him about her husband, who had been to hear the *predestinarian* gospel, returned home *elect*, and, in proof of it, *beat his wife*. 1741 Age 38

For some months, in the year 1741, Charles Wesley was in danger of subsiding into Moravian *stillness*; and his brother wrote to him, "The Philistines are upon thee, Samson, but the Lord is not departed from thee." Gambold also, and Westley Hall, were inoculated with the same pernicious poison. Charles went off to Bristol, and on April 21 Wesley addressed to him the following:—

"I rejoice in your speaking your mind freely. O let our love be without dissimulation!

"As yet, I dare in nowise join with the Moravians: 1. Because their whole scheme is mystical, not scriptural. 2. Because there is darkness and closeness in their whole behaviour, and guile in almost all their words. 3. Because they utterly deny and despise self denial and the daily cross. 4. Because they, upon principle, conform to the world, in wearing gold or costly apparel. 5. Because they extend Christian liberty, in this and many other respects, beyond what is warranted in holy writ. 6. Because they are by no means zealous of good works; or, at least, only to their own people. And, lastly, because they make inward religion swallow up outward in general. For these reasons chiefly, I will rather stand quite alone, than join with them: I mean till I have full assurance, that they will spread none of their errors among the little flock committed to my charge.

"O my brother, my soul is grieved for you; the poison is in you: fair words have stolen away your heart. 'No English man or woman is like the Moravians!' So the matter is come to a fair issue. Five of us did still stand together a few months since; but two are gone to the right hand, Hutchins and Cennick; and two more to the left, Mr. Hall and you. Lord, if it be Thy gospel which I preach, arise and maintain Thine own cause! Adieu!"[1]

In the month of May, a reunion of Wesley's London society with the Moravians at Fetter Lane was solemnly discussed; and all the bands met at the Foundery, on a Wednesday afternoon, to ask God to give them guidance. "It was clear to all," writes Wesley, "even those who were

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 102.

1741 Age 38 before the most desirous of reunion, that the time was not come: (1) because the brethren of Fetter Lane had not given up their most essentially erroneous doctrines; and, (2) because many of us had found so much guile in their words, that we could scarce tell what they really held, and what not."

Wesley entertained no bitterness towards the Moravians. He readily acknowledges, that they had a sincere desire to serve God; that many of them had tasted of His love that they abstained from outward sin; and that their discipline, in most respects, was excellent: but, after reading all their English publications, and "waiving their odd and affected phrases; their weak, mean, silly, childish expressions; their crude, confused, and undigested notions; and their whims, unsupported either by Scripture or sound reason,"—he found three grand, unretracted errors running through almost all their books, namely "universal salvation, antinomianism, and a kind of new, reformed quietism." No wonder that the thought of reunion was abandoned.

A month after the above meeting, at the Foundery, Wesley made a tour among the Moravians, in the midland counties. Here Ingham had preached with great success; and here Mr. Simpson, one of the Oxford Methodists, had settled as a sort of Moravian minister. During the journey, Wesley made an experiment which he had often been urged to make, namely that of speaking to no one on sacred things, unless his heart was free to it. The result was, that, for eighty miles together, he had no need to speak at all; and he tells us that, instead of having crosses to take up and bear, he commonly fell fast asleep; and all behaved to him, as to a civil, good-natured gentleman. On reaching Ockbrook, where Simpson lived, he found that though, a few months before, there had been a great awakening all round about, three-fourths of the converts were now backsliders. Simpson had drawn the people from the Church, and had advised them to abandon devotion. He said, there was no Church of England left; and that there was no scriptural command for family or private prayer. The sum of his teaching was: "If you wish to believe, be still; and leave off what you call the means of grace, such as prayer and running to church and sacrament."

Mr. Graves, the clergyman of the parish, having offered the use of his church to Wesley, the latter preached two sermons, one on "the true gospel stillness," and the other from his favourite text—"By grace are ye saved, through faith." 1741 Age 38

From Ockbrook, Wesley went to Nottingham, where he found further evidences of backsliding. The room, which used to be crowded, was now half empty; and the few who did attend the services, instead of praying when they entered, sat down without any religious formality whatever, and began talking to their neighbours. When Wesley engaged in prayer among them, none knelt, and "those who stood chose the most easy and indolent posture which they conveniently could." One of the hymn-books, published by the Wesleys, had been sent from London to be used in the public congregations; but both that and the Bible were now banished; and, in the place of them, lay the Moravian hymns and Zinzendorf's sixteen sermons. Wesley preached twice in this Moravian meeting; and once in the market place, to an immense multitude, all of whom, with two or three exceptions, behaved with great decorum.

After spending a week at Markfield, Ockbrook, Nottingham, Melbourn, and Hemmington, and also probably becoming acquainted with the Countess of Huntingdon, who lived in this locality, Wesley returned to town, on the 16th of June, and, a fortnight after, went to Oxford, where he met his old friend Mr. Gambold, who honestly told him, he was ashamed of his company, and must be excused going to the Moravian meeting with him.

At the beginning of September, Zinzendorf wished to have an interview, and, at his request, Wesley went to Gray's-inn Walk, a public promenade, to meet him. Zinzendorf charged him with having changed his religion; with having quarreled with the Brethren; and with having refused to be at peace with them, even after they had asked his forgiveness. In reference to Wesley's doctrine of Christian perfection, the count became furious. "This," said he, "is the error of errors. I pursue it through the world with fire and sword. I trample upon it. I devote it to utter destruction. Christ is our sole perfection. Whoever follows inherent perfection, de-

1741 Age 38 nies Christ. All Christian perfection is faith in the blood of Christ; and is wholly imputed, not inherent." Wesley asked, if they were not striving about words; and, by a series of questions, got the obfuscated German to admit, "that, a believer is altogether holy in heart and life,—that he loves God with all his heart, and serves Him with all his powers." Wesley continued: "I desire nothing more. I mean nothing else by perfection, or Christian holiness." Zinzendorf rejoined: "But this is not the believer's holiness. He is not more holy if he loves more, or less holy, if he loves less. In the moment he is justified, he is sanctified wholly; and, from that time, he is neither more nor less holy, even unto death. Our whole justification, and sanctification, are in the same instant. From the moment any one is justified, his heart is as pure as it ever will be." Wesley asked again: "Perhaps I do not comprehend your meaning. Do we not, while we deny ourselves, die more and more to the world and live to God?" Zinzendorf replied: "We reject all self denial. We trample upon it. We do, as believers, whatsoever we will, and nothing more. We laugh at all mortification. No purification precedes perfect love."[1] And thus the conference ended.

"The count," said Mr. Stonehouse after reading the conversation, "is a clever fellow; but the genius of Methodism is too strong for him."[2]

Zinzendorf accused Wesley of refusing to live in peace, even after the Brethren had humbled themselves and begged his pardon. Wesley says there is a mistake in this. Fifty or more Moravians spoke bitterly against him; one or two asked his pardon, but did it in the most careless manner possible. The rest, if ashamed of their behaviour at all, managed to keep their shame a profound secret from him.[3]

As to the count's theory, that a man is wholly sanctified the moment he is justified—a theory held by the Rev. Dr. Bunting, at all events, at the commencement of his ministerial career[4]—we say nothing; but there can be no question, that his sentiments respecting self denial, and the right of believers to do

[1] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 481. [2] Ibid. p. 489.
[3] Wesley's Works, vol. ii., p. 27. [4] Life of Dr. Bunting, vol. i., p. 395.

or not to do what they like, are, in a high degree, delusive and dangerous. We have here the very essence of the antinomian heresy, and are thus prepared for an entry in Charles Wesley's journal:— 1741 Age 38

1741. September 6.—"I was astonished by a letter from my brother, relating his conference with the apostle of the Moravians. Who would believe it of Count Zinzendorf, that he should utterly deny all Christian holiness? I never could, but for a saying of his, which I heard with my own ears. Speaking of St. James's epistle, he said: 'If it was thrown out of the canon, I would not restore it.'"

The heresy of such a man was of vast importance; for, in this same year and month, September, 1741, Zinzendorf told Doddridge, that he had "sent out, from his own family of Moravians, three hundred preachers, who were gone into most parts of the world; and that he himself was now become the guardian of the Protestant churches in the south of France, sixty of which were assembling privately for worship."[1]

As already stated, Charles Wesley was in danger of falling into the Moravian heresy. The following is an extract from a letter addressed to Wesley by the Countess of Huntingdon, and dated October 24, 1741.

"Since you left us, the *still ones* are not without their attacks. I fear much more for your brother than for myself, as the conquest of the one would be nothing in respect to the other. They have, by one of their agents, reviled me very much, but I have taken no sort of notice of it. I comfort myself, that you will approve a step with respect to them, which your brother and I have taken: no less than his declaring open war against them. He seemed under some difficulty about it at first, till he had free liberty given him to use my name, as the instrument, in God's hand, that had delivered him from them. I rejoiced much at it, hoping it might be the means of working my deliverance from them. I have desired him to enclose to them yours on Christian perfection. The doctrine therein contained, I hope to live and die by; it is absolutely the most complete thing I know. Your brother is also to give his reasons for separating. I have great faith God will not let him fall; for many would fall with him. His natural parts, his judgment, and the improvement he has made, are so very far above the very highest of them, that I should imagine nothing but frenzy had seized upon him.

"We set out a week ago for Donnington, and you shall hear from me as soon as I arrive, and have heard how your little flock goes on in that neighbourhood."[2]

[1] Doddridge's Correspondence, vol. iv., p. 56.
[2] *Methodist Magazine*, 1798, p. 490.

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Methodists will learn, from this interesting letter, that they owe a debt of gratitude to the noble and "elect lady" of the midland counties.

We turn to Whitefield. On his arrival from America, in the month of March, he found his position far from pleasant.

First of all, there was the melancholy death of his friend, William Seward—really Methodism's first martyr—a man of considerable property, but of meagre education and inferior talent; Whitefield's travelling companion in his second voyage to Georgia, and who, at the time of his being murdered, in Wales, was itinerating with Howel Harris in Glamorganshire. At Newport, the mob had torn Harris's coat to tatters, stolen his wig, and pelted him and his companion with apples, stones, and dirt. At Caerleon, rotten eggs were thrown in all directions, Seward's eye was struck, and, a few days after, he was entirely blind. At Monmouth, their treatment was of the same kind as at Newport and Caerleon; but Seward bravely cried, "Better endure this than hell." At length, on reaching Hay, a villain hit him on the head; the blow was fatal; and William Seward went to inherit a martyr's crown, at the early age of thirty-eight, on October 22, 1741.

Besides the death of Methodism's protomartyr, there were other troubles which Whitefield had to carry. He had an orphan family of nearly a hundred persons to maintain; was above a thousand pounds in debt for them; and was threatened with arrest on account of a bill for £350, drawn, in favour of the orphan house by his dead friend, William Seward, but which had not been met by him. James Hutton, who had been his publisher, refused to have any further transactions with him. "Many of my spiritual children," he writes, "who, when I last left England, would have plucked out their own eyes to have given me, are so prejudiced by the dear Messrs. Wesleys' dressing up of election in such horrible colours, that they will neither hear, see, nor give me the least assistance. Yea, some of them send threatening letters, that God will speedily destroy me. As for the people of the world, they are so embittered by my *injudicious* and *too severe* expressions against Archbishop Tillotson, the author of the old Duty of Man, that they fly from me as from a viper; and, what is

worst of all, I am now constrained, on account of our differing in principles, publicly to separate from my dear, dear old friends, Messrs. John and Charles Wesley."[1] 1741 Age 38

During his passage to England, Whitefield wrote to Charles Wesley as follows: "My dear, dear brother, why did you throw out the bone of contention? Why did you print that sermon against predestination? Why did *you*, in particular, affix your hymn and join in putting out your late hymn-book? How can you say you will not dispute with me about election, and yet print such hymns?" And then he proceeds to state, that he had written an answer to Wesley's sermon on free grace, and was about to have it printed in Charlestown, Boston, and London.[2]

About six weeks before his arrival in England, some one obtained a copy of the letter he had sent to Wesley, under the date of September 25, 1740,[3] (an extract of which is given in the previous chapter, page 316,) and had printed it without either his or Wesley's consent, and circulated it gratuitously at the doors of the Foundery. Wesley heard of this; and, having procured a copy, tore it in pieces before the assembled congregation, declaring that he believed Whitefield would have done the same. The congregation imitated their minister's example, and, in two minutes, all the copies were literally torn to tatters.

Three weeks after this, Wesley had to hurry off to Kingswood to allay the turmoils there. He met the bands, but it was a cold uncomfortable meeting. Cennick and fifteen or twenty of his friends had an interview with Wesley, who accused them of speaking against him behind his back. They replied that they had said nothing behind his back which they would not say before his face; namely, that he preached up the faithfulness of man, and not the faithfulness of God.

After a lovefeast, held in Bristol on Sunday evening, February 22, Wesley related to the Bristol Methodists, that many of their brethren at Kingswood had formed themselves into a separate society, on account of Cennick preaching doc-

[1] Whitefield's Works, vol. i., p. 257. [2] Benson's "Apology," p. 137.
[3] *Weekly Miscellany*, March 14, 1741.

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trines different to those preached by himself and his brother. Cennick, who was present, affirmed, that Wesley's doctrine was false. Wesley charged him with supplanting him in his own house, stealing the hearts of the people, and, by private accusations, dividing very friends. Cennick replied, "I have never privately accused you." Wesley, who, by some means, was possessed of a letter which Cennick had recently addressed to Whitefield, answered: "My brethren, judge;" and then began to read as follows:—

"*January* 17, 1741.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—That you might come quickly, I have written a second time. I sit solitary, like Eli, waiting what will become of the ark. My trouble increases daily. How glorious did the gospel seem once to flourish in Kingswood! I spake of the everlasting love of Christ with sweet power; but now brother Charles is suffered to open his mouth against this truth, while the frighted sheep gaze and fly, as if no shepherd was among them. O, pray for the distressed lambs yet left in this place, that they faint not! Brother Charles pleases the world with universal redemption, and brother John follows him in everything. No atheist can preach more against predestination than they; and all who believe election are counted enemies to God, and called so. Fly, dear brother I am as alone; I am in the midst of the plague. If God give thee leave, make haste."

Cennick acknowledged the letter was his, that it had been sent to Whitefield, and that he retracted nothing in it. The meeting got excited, and Wesley adjourned the settlement of the business to Kingswood on Saturday next ensuing.

Here he heard all that any one wished to say, and then read the following paper:—

"BY many witnesses, it appears that several members of the band society in Kingswood have made it their common practice to scoff at the preaching of Mr. John and Charles Wesley; that they have censured and spoken evil of them behind their backs, at the very time they professed love and esteem to their faces; that they have studiously endeavoured to prejudice other members of that society against them; and, in order thereto, have belied and slandered them in divers instances.

"Therefore, not for their opinions, nor for any of them (whether they be right or wrong), but for the causes above mentioned, viz. for their scoffing at the word and ministers of God, for their talebearing, backbiting, and evil speaking, for their dissembling, lying, and slandering:

"I, John Wesley, by the consent and approbation of the band society in Kingswood, do declare the persons above mentioned to be no longer members thereof. Neither will they be so accounted, until they shall

openly confess their fault, and thereby do what in them lies, to remove the scandal they have given." 1741 Age 38

This is a remarkable document. It was hardly two years since Whitefield and Wesley began to preach at Kingswood, and yet here we have a large number of their converts charged with backbiting, lying, slandering, and other crimes. "How is the gold become dim!" Were the former days better than these? We doubt it.

Here we also have the first Methodist expulsion; not for opinions, but for sins; not by the sole authority and act of John Wesley, but "by the consent and approbation" of the society, whose refractory members were to be put away. Such was Methodism, at its beginning.

Cennick, and those who sympathised with his sentiments, refused to own that they had done aught amiss; and declared that, on many occasions, he had heard both Wesley and his brother preach Popery. Wesley gave them another week to think the matter over. They were still intractable; and alleged that the *real* cause of their expulsion was their holding the doctrine of election. Wesley answered, "You know in your conscience it is not. There are several predestinarians in our societies both at London and Bristol, nor did I ever put any one out of either because he held that opinion." The result of the whole was, Cennick and fifty-one others at once withdrew, and the remainder, numbering about a hundred, still adhered to Wesley.[1]

Such was the first schism in Methodist history,—John Cennick the leader,—fifty of the Kingswood members its abettors,—and John Wesley and a majority of the Kingswood society, the court enacting their expulsion.

The writer's chief object is to furnish facts, and therefore he refrains from comment on these transactions. No doubt Cennick was sincere. After the risks he ran in preaching Christ, no one can doubt his Christian earnestness: but, having come to Kingswood at Wesley's invitation, and having been employed by him as the teacher of his school, and also as an evangelist among the surrounding colliers, it

[1] Cennick says: "When we were separated, we were in number twelve men and twelve women." ("Life of Cennick," p. 27.)

1741 Age 38 would, at least, have been more courteous to have quietly retired from his present sphere of action, when he found his views different from those of his patron and his friend, than it was for him to pursue the controversial and divisive course he did. John Cennick had a lion's courage and a martyr's piety; but his passions sometimes mastered his prudence, and, for want of the serpent's wisdom, he often failed in exhibiting the meekness of the dove.

Whitefield arrived in London a few days after the Kingswood expulsion; and Wesley, on the 25th of March, hastened off to meet him. Whitefield told him they preached two different gospels, and that he was resolved to preach against him and his brother wherever he preached at all. A weekly publication, of four folio pages, entitled "The Weekly History; or An Account of the most remarkable Particulars relating to the present Progress of the Gospel," was immediately started by J. Lewis, Whitefield promising to supply him with fresh matter every week. This was really the first Methodist newspaper ever published. Of course, Calvinism was its inspiring genius. The principal contributors were Whitefield, Cennick, Howel Harris, and Joseph Humphreys.

The last mentioned was employed by Wesley as a sort of Moravian lay preacher, as early as the year 1738,[1] and was greatly attached to him. At this period, he was acting as Moravian minister at Deptford, and wrote to Wesley as follows:—

"DEPTFORD, *April* 5, 1741.

"DEAR AND REVEREND SIR,—I think I love you better than ever. I would not grieve you by any means, if I could possibly help it. I think I had never more power in preaching than I had this morning. And, if this is the consequence of electing everlasting love, may my soul be ever filled with it!"[2]

In another letter, of three weeks later date, addressed to "Mr. M——," he avows his belief in the doctrine of final perseverance, and proceeds to say:—

"The doctrine of sinless perfection in this life, I utterly renounce. I believe the preaching of it has led many souls into darkness and con-

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. iv., p. 473.
[2] *Weekly History*, No. 11.

fusion. I believe those that hold it, if children of God at all, are in a very legal state. I believe those who pretend to have attained it are dangerously ignorant of their own hearts. I also see that, if I incline towards universal redemption any longer, I must also hold with universal salvation." 1741 Æ 38

He then adds: "Last Saturday I sent the following letter to the Rev. Mr. J. Wesley."

"REVEREND SIR,—I would have been joined with you to all eternity if I could; but my having continued with you so long as I have has led me into grievous temptation; and I now think it my duty no longer to join with you, but openly to renounce your peculiar doctrines. I have begun to do it at London; and, as the Lord shall enable me, will proceed to do it here at Bristol. I feel no bitterness in my spirit, but love you, pray for you, and respect you.

"I am, sir, your humble servant and unworthy brother,

"JOSEPH HUMPHREYS."

The above letter was sent to the editor of the *Weekly History* by Whitefield, accompanied by the following note:—

"I would have you print this letter with my last. If you think it best, I would also have it printed in the *Daily Advertiser*. I see the mystery of iniquity, that is working, more and more.

"Ever yours,

"G. WHITEFIELD."[1]

Humphreys and Cennick were now both at Kingswood, which was, for the time being, the head quarters of the Calvinistic schism. Here, in the month of April, the separatists got, from an old man, his copy of Wesley's treatise against predestination, and burnt it.[2] About the same time, however, Wesley distributed a thousand copies among Whitefield's congregation, and a thousand more at the Foundery;[3] and, in the same month, addressed the following characteristic letter to his friend.[4]

"*April*, 1741.

"Would you have me deal plainly with you? I believe you would; then, by the grace of God, I will.

"Of many things I find you are not rightly informed; of others you speak what you have not well weighed.

"'The society room at Bristol,' you say, 'is adorned.' How? Why, with a piece of green cloth nailed to the desk; and two sconces for eigh[t]

[1] *Weekly History*, No. 4. [2] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. i., p. 267
[3] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 102. [4] Ibid. p. 147.

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candles each in the middle. I know no more. Now, which of these can be spared I know not; nor would I desire more adorning, or less.

"But 'lodgings are made for me and my brother.' That is, in plain English, there is a little room by the school, where I speak to the persons who come to me; and a garret, in which a bed is placed for me. And do you grudge me this? Is this the voice of my brother, my son. Whitefield?

"You say further, 'that the children at Bristol are clothed as well as taught.' I am sorry for it, for the cloth is not paid for yet, and was bought without my consent, or knowledge. 'But those at Kingswood have been neglected.' This is not so, notwithstanding the heavy debt that lay upon it. One master and one mistress have been in the house ever since it was capable of receiving them. A second master has been placed there some months since; and I have long been seeking for two proper mistresses; so that as much has been done, as matters stand, if not more, than I can answer to God and man.

"Hitherto, then, there is no ground for the heavy charge of perverting your design for the poor colliers. Two years since, your design was to build them a school. To this end, you collected some money more than once; how much I cannot say, till I have my papers. But this I know, it was not near one-half of what has been expended on the work. This design you then recommended to me, and I pursued it with all my might, through such a train of difficulties as, I will be bold to say, you have not met with in your life. For many months, I collected money wherever I was, and began building, though I had not then a quarter of the money requisite to finish. However, taking all the debt upon myself, the creditors were willing to stay; and then it was that I took possession of it in my own name; that is, when the foundation was laid; and I immediately made my will, fixing you and my brother to succeed me therein.

"But it is a poor case, that you and I should be talking thus. Indeed, these things ought not to be. It lay in your power to have prevented all, and yet to have borne testimony to what you call 'the truth.' If you had disliked my sermon, you might have printed another on the same text, and have answered my proofs, without mentioning my name; this had been fair and friendly."

The two friends were thus at variance; but every candid reader must honestly acknowledge, that Wesley triumphantly refutes Whitefield's petulant objections.

Meanwhile, Whitefield's adherents in the metropolis, within a few days after his arrival, set to work to erect him a wooden building near the Foundery, which they called "a Tabernacle, for morning's exposition."[1] On April 25, he went to Bristol,

[1] Whitefield's Works, vol. i, p. 257.

where Charles Wesley was officiating; and, three weeks after, wrote to a friend, saying, "The doctrines of the gospel are sadly run down, and most monstrous errors propagated. They assert, 'that the very in-being of sin must be taken out of us, or otherwise we are not new creatures.' However, at Bristol, error is in a great measure put a stop to."[1] 1741 Age 38

So Whitefield thought, and yet, at this very time, Charles Wesley was preaching at Bristol and Kingswood, if possible, with greater power than ever. In June, however, Whitefield began to collect money for a rival meeting-house at Kingswood, and wished John Cennick to lay the foundation immediately, but to take care not to make the building either too large or too handsome.[2]

Wesley and Whitefield were divided; but Howel Harris, with his warm Welsh heart, tried to reunite them. In the month of October, Harris had loving interviews with both Wesley and his brother, and wrote to Whitefield, then in Scotland. Whitefield, easily moved in the path of Christian love, immediately addressed to Wesley the letter following:—

"ABERDEEN, *October* 10, 1741.

"REVEREND AND DEAR BROTHER,—This morning I received a letter from brother Harris, telling me how he had conversed with you and your dear brother. May God remove all obstacles that now prevent our union! Though I hold particular election, yet I offer Jesus freely to every individual soul. You may carry sanctification to what degrees you will, only I cannot agree with you that the in-being of sin is to be destroyed in this life. In about three weeks, I hope to be at Bristol. May all disputings cease, and each of us talk of nothing but Jesus and Him crucified! This is my resolution. I am, without dissimulation,

"Ever yours,

"G. WHITEFIELD."[3]

It was nearly two years after this that Wesley wrote the piece, in his collected works, entitled, "Calvinistic Controversy" (vol. xiii., p. 478). He says:—

"Having found for some time a strong desire to unite with Mr. Whitefield, as far as possible, to cut off needless dispute, I wrote down my sentiments, as plain as I could, in the following terms:—

[1] Whitefield's Works, vol. i., p. 261. [2] Ibid. p. 271.
[3] Ibid. p. 331.

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"There are three points in debate: 1. Unconditional election. 2. Irresistible grace. 3. Final perseverance."

With regard to the first, Wesley expresses his belief, that God has unconditionally elected certain persons to do certain work, and certain nations to receive peculiar privileges; and allows, though he says he cannot prove, that God "has unconditionally elected some persons, thence eminently styled 'the elect,' to eternal glory;" but he cannot believe, that all those, not thus elected to glory, must perish everlastingly; or, that there is a soul on earth but what has the chance of escaping eternal damnation.

With regard to irresistible grace, he believes, that the grace which brings faith, and thereby, salvation, is irresistible at that moment; and, that most believers may remember a time when God irresistibly convinced them of sin, and other times when He acted irresistibly upon their souls; but he also believes, that the grace of God, both before and after these moments, may be, and hath been resisted; and that, in general, it does not act irresistibly, but we may comply therewith, or may not. In those eminently styled "the elect" (if such there be), the grace of God is so far irresistible, that they cannot but believe, and be finally saved; but it is not true, that all those must be damned in whom it does not thus irresistibly work, or, that there is a soul living who has not any other grace than such as was designed of God to increase his damnation.

With regard to final perseverance, he believes, "that there is a state attainable in this life, from which a man cannot finally fall; and that he has attained this, who can say, 'Old things are passed away; all things in me are become new;' and, further, he does not deny, that all those eminently styled 'the elect' will infallibly persevere to the end."[1]

In reference to "the elect," Henry Moore adds, that Wesley told him, that, when he wrote this, he believed, with Macarius, that all who are perfected in love are thus elect.

The document from which the above is taken, was written in 1743. As Mr. Jackson says, it "evidently leans too much towards Calvinism." It is valuable chiefly because it shows

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. i., p. 401.

Wesley's anxiety to be at peace with Whitefield. The latter writes as though all the blame, in reference to the rupture in their friendship, lay with Wesley; whereas this was far from being true. Wesley honestly and firmly believed the doctrine of general redemption; and, because he preached it, and published a sermon in condemnation of the doctrines opposed to it, Whitefield worked himself into a fume, and wrote his pamphlet, in which he not only tries to refute Wesley's teaching, but unnecessarily makes a personal attack on Wesley's character, and taunts him about casting lots,—a wanton outrage, for which, in October, 1741, he humbly begged his pardon.[1] The intolerant, excessive zeal was altogether on the side of Whitefield. Wesley believed and preached general redemption; but raised no objection to Whitefield believing and preaching election and final perseverance. Instead of reciprocating this, Whitefield, in his pamphlet, blustered; and, in his letters, whined, until the difference of opinion disturbed their friendship, and led them to build separate chapels, form separate societies, and pursue, to the end of life, separate lines of action. One of Wesley's friends wished him to reply to Whitefield's pamphlet. Wesley answered, "You may read Whitefield against Wesley; but you shall never read Wesley against Whitefield."[2] In private, Wesley opposed Whitefield, but in public never. On one occasion, when the two friends met in a large social gathering, Whitefield mounted his hobby, and spoke largely and valiantly in defence of his favourite system. Wesley, on the other hand, was silent till all the company were gone, when, turning to the spurred and belted controversial knight, he quietly remarked, "Brother, are you aware of what you have done to-night?" "Yes," said Whitefield, "I have defended truth." "You have tried to prove," replied Wesley, "that God is worse than the devil; for the devil can only *tempt* a man to sin; but, if what you have said be true, God *forces* a man to sin; and therefore, on your own system, God is worse than the devil."[3]

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Thus the gulf between Wesley and Whitefield was immense.

[1] Whitefield's Works, vol. i., p. 331.
[2] "Anecdotes of Wesley, by Rev. J. Reynolds." Leeds: 1828.
[3] Ibid. p. 13.

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"It was undesirable—indeed, it was impossible—that they should continue to address, in turn, the same congregations; for such congregations would have been kept in the pitiable condition of a ship, thrown on its beam ends, larboard and starboard, by hurricanes driving alternately east and west."[1]

Being separated from Whitefield and the Moravians, Wesley began to purge and to organise the societies, which were now purely and properly his own. At Bristol, he took an account of every person—(1) to whom any reasonable objection was made; and (2) who was not known to and recommended by some, on whose veracity he could depend. To those who were sufficiently recommended, he gave tickets. Most of the rest he had face to face with their accusers; and such as appeared to be innocent, or confessed their faults and promised better behaviour, were then received into the society. The others were put upon trial again, unless they voluntarily expelled themselves. By this purging process, about forty were excluded.[2] He also appointed stewards, to receive and expend what was contributed weekly; and, finding the funds insufficient, he discharged two of the Bristol schoolmasters, retaining still, at Kingswood and Bristol unitedly, three masters and two mistresses for the two schools respectively.

In London, he adopted the same process, and set apart the hours from ten to two, on every day but Saturday, for speaking with the bands and other persons, that no disorderly walker, nor any of a careless or contentious spirit, might remain among them; the result of which was the society was reduced to about a thousand members.[3] Ascertaining that many of the members were without needful food, and destitute of convenient clothing, he appointed twelve persons to visit every alternate day, and to provide things needful for the sick; also to meet once a week to give an account of their proceedings, and to consult what could be done further. Women, out of work, he proposed to employ in knitting, giving them the common price for the work they did, and then adding gratuities according to their needs.

[1] Taylor's "Wesley and Methodism," p. 44.
[2] Thirty more were expelled at a later period of the year.
[3] Wesley's Ecclesiastical History, vol. iv., p. 178.

To meet these expenses, he requested those who could afford it, to give a penny weekly, and to contribute any clothing which their own use did not require. 1741 Age 38

Here we have a new Methodist agency employed. Wesley had already permitted laymen to exhort and preach; he now authorised them to pay pastoral visits among his people. At present, they were *mere visitors*, and meetings analogous to the class-meetings of the present day did not exist. The two Wesleys often addressed the societies apart, after they had dismissed the general congregation. They also fixed certain hours for private conversation; and now they appointed visitors to visit those who through sickness, poverty, or other causes, were not able to avail themselves of such assistance. This, as yet, was all. In the present sense, bands and classes there were none, except that each society, after the manner of the Moravians, was divided into male and female, and, perhaps, married and unmarried, bands, all of them watched over by Wesley or by his brother; and the sick and poor among them visited by persons appointed to that office. In Bristol, several members applied to Wesley for baptism, and he gave the bishop notice to that effect, adding, that they desired him to baptize them by immersion.[1] The Kingswood society, having been repelled from the sacramental table at Temple church, Charles Wesley gave them the sacrament in their own humble school; and, notwithstanding his high churchism, declared that, under the circumstances, if they had not had the school, he should have felt himself justified in administering it in the wood. In London, some of the members communicated at St. Paul's, or at their own parish churches; but, during the autumn, on five successive Sundays, Wesley availed himself of the offer of Mr. Deleznot, a French clergyman, and used his small church, in Hermitage Street, Wapping, in administering the Lord's supper to five successive batches of about two hundred members of his society (as many as the place could well contain), until all the society, consisting of about a thousand persons, had received it.[2]

To the members at Bristol, and doubtless also at London, Wesley gave *tickets*. On every ticket he wrote, with his own

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 53. [2] Ibid. vol. xiii., pp. 242, 293.

1741 Age 38 hand, the member's name, "so that," says he, "the ticket implied as strong a recommendation of the person to whom it was given as if I had wrote at length, 'I believe the bearer hereof to be one that fears God and works righteousness.'"

Wesley regarded these tickets as being equivalent to the *επιστολαι συστατικαι*, "commendatory letters," mentioned by the apostle, and says they were of use: (1) because, wherever those who bore them came, they were acknowledged by their brethren, and received with all cheerfulness; (2) when the societies had to meet apart, the tickets easily distinguished who were members and who were not; (3) they supplied a quiet and inoffensive method of removing any disorderly member; for, the tickets being changed once a quarter, and, of course, no new ticket being given to such a person, it was hereby immediately known that he was no longer a member of the community.[1]

The writer is possessed of nearly a complete set of these society tickets, from the first, issued about 1742, to those given a hundred years afterwards. Many of them bear the autographs of John and Charles Wesley, William Grimshaw, and other old Methodist worthies. The earliest are wood and copper-plate engravings, printed on cardboard, without any text of Scripture: some bearing the emblem of an angel flying in the clouds of heaven, with one trumpet to his mouth, and a second in his hand; and others of the Sun of Righteousness shining on a phœnix rising out of fire. Some have a dove encircled with glory; and others have no engraving whatever, but simply an inscription, written by Charles Wesley, "August, 1746." Some merely have the word "Society" imprinted, with the member's name written underneath; others have a lamb carrying a flag; and others a tree with a broken stem, Jehovah as a sun shining on it, and at its foot two men, one planting a new cutting, and the other watering one already planted. Some represent Christ in the clouds of heaven, with the cross in one hand and a crown in the other; and others represent the Christian kneeling before an altar, inscribed with the words, "Pray always and faint not." One represents Christ as washing a

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. viii., p. 247.

disciple's feet; and another, with a text of Scripture at the top, has four lines below, in which are printed, "March 25, June 25, September 29, December 25," with space left opposite to each for writing the member's name, and so making one ticket serve for the four quarters of a year. One bears the impress of an anchor and a crown; and another the image of old father Time, hurrying along, with a scroll in his hand, inscribed with "Now is the accepted time." Some are printed with black ink, some with red, and some with blue. In 1750, emblems partly gave way to texts of Scripture, which have been continued from that time to this. 1741 Age 38

The Methodist societies, as organised by Wesley, were thus fairly started in 1741. Meanwhile, Methodism on earth began to swell the inhabitants of heaven. At the very commencement of the year, Elizabeth Davis, of London, after she was speechless, being desired to hold up her hand if she knew she was going to God, immediately held up both. Anne Cole, on being asked by Wesley, whether she chose to live or die, answered: "I choose neither, I choose nothing. I am in my Saviour's hands, and I have no will but His." Another of the London members, when visited by Wesley, said: "I am very ill,—but I am very well. O, I am happy, happy, happy! My spirit continually rejoices in God my Saviour. Life or death is all one to me. I have no darkness, no cloud. My body indeed is weak and in pain, but my soul is all joy and praise." Jane Muncy exclaimed: "I faint not, I murmur not, I rejoice evermore, and in everything give thanks. God is ever with me, and I have nothing to do but praise Him." In Bristol, a woman in her dying agonies cried out: "O, how loving is God to me! But He is loving to every man, and loves every soul as well as He loves mine." The last words of another were, "Death stares me in the face, but I fear him not." Hannah Richardson, who was followed to her grave by the whole of the Bristol society, the procession being pelted in the streets with dirt and stones, said: "I have no fear, no doubt, no trouble. Heaven is open! I see Jesus Christ with all His angels and saints in white. I see what I cannot utter or express." Sister Hooper cried, "I am in great pain, but in greater joy." Sister

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Lillington exclaimed, "I never felt such love before; I love every soul: I am all love, and so is God." Rachel Peacock sang hymns incessantly, and was so filled with joy that she shouted: "Though I groan, I feel no pain at all; Christ so rejoices and fills my heart."[1] And to all these may be added Keziah Wesley. In a letter to his brother, dated March 9, 1741, Charles Wesley writes: "Yesterday morning, sister Kezzy died in the Lord Jesus. He finished His work, and cut it short in mercy. Full of thankfulness, resignation, and love, without pain or trouble, she commended her spirit into the hands of Jesus, and fell asleep."[2]

These were triumphs in the midst of troubles; for, besides the anxiety and pain arising out of the differences with Whitefield and the Moravians, Wesley, in 1741, had to encounter no inconsiderable amount of unprincipled persecution. At Deptford, while he was preaching, "many poor wretches were got together, utterly devoid both of common sense and common decency, who cried aloud, as if just come from 'among the tombs.'" In London, on Shrove Tuesday, "many men of the baser sort" mixed themselves with the female part of his congregation, and behaved with great indecency. "A constable commanded them to keep the peace, in answer to which they knocked him down." In Long Lane, while Wesley was preaching, the mob pelted him with stones, one of great size passing close to his head. In Marylebone Fields, in the midst of his sermon, out of doors, missiles fell thick and fast on every side. In Charles Square, Hoxton, the rabble brought an ox which they endeavoured to drive through the congregation. A man, who happened to be a Dissenting minister, after hearing him preach at Chelsea, asked, "*Quid est tibi nomen?*" and, on Wesley not answering his impertinence, the pedantic puppy turned in triumph to his friends, and said, "Ah! I told you he did not understand Latin." Among other slanders concerning him, it was currently reported that he had paid a fine of £20, for selling Geneva gin; that he kept in his house two popish priests; that he had received large remittances from Spain, in order

[1] C. Wesley's Journal.
[2] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 85.

to make a party among the poor; and that, as soon as the Spaniards landed, he was to join them with twenty thousand men. It was also rumoured, that, in Bristol, he had hanged himself, and had been cut down just in time to save his life. The *Scots Magazine*, for August, had a scurrilous article to the following effect. Above thirty Methodists had been in Bedlam, and six were there at present. Wesley had set up, at his Moorfields meeting-house, a number of spinning wheels, where girls who had absconded from their homes, and servants who had been discharged for neglecting their master's business, were set to work, and were allowed sixpence daily, the overplus of their earnings going into Wesley's pocket. Boys and girls mixed together, and were taught to call each other brother and sister in the Lord. They had to greet each other with a holy kiss, and to show the utmost affection and fondness, in imitation of the primitive Christians. In the rooms adjoining the spinning wheels were several beds, and when persons, in the Foundery congregation, fell into fits, either pretended or real, they were carried out and laid upon these beds, that Wesley might pray the evil spirits out of them, and the good spirit into them, and thus convert them. 1741 Age 38

In refutation of this tissue of unmingled falsehoods, a writer says, in the same magazine, that he had visited the Foundery, and found it "an old open house, like the tennis court at Edinburgh;" but there were no bedchambers, and no spinning wheels; and, consequently, no runaway girls nor discarded menials. And, so far from above thirty Methodists having been sent to Bedlam, the writer had made inquiry in London, and was unable to hear of one.[1]

The *Gentleman's Magazine*, for the same year (page 26), has a ridiculous letter, purporting to be from a Methodist to a clergyman, in which the clergyman is charged with turning "the *Scripters* upside down," and with calling the Methodists "*expounding infildelfels.*" Appended to the letter are annotations, stating that, in a certain barn, twenty or thirty Methodists rendezvous to hear a young schoolmaster preach, pray, and sing Wesley's hymns; and that, recently, a mob of

[1] *Scots Magazine*, 1741, p. 380.

1741 Age 38 juveniles had chastised his ambition by throwing snowballs at him; but the preaching pedagogue, instead of ceasing, had cheered himself by singing hymns suitable to such adventurers; and a cobbler's wife had been so excited by his dissertations upon the pangs of the new birth, that she imagined herself pregnant with devils, had been delivered of two or three, but still felt others struggling within her.

The *Weekly Miscellany* tells its readers that, in the assemblies of the expounding houses, lately erected in the outskirts of London by the Methodists, any one, who conceits himself inwardly moved, immediately sets up for a Scripture expounder. In a long article, it pretends to show that the Methodist preachers are like the German Anabaptists—1. Because they act contrary to the oaths they have taken. 2. Because of their invectives against the clergy. 3. Because they are against all rule and authority. 4. Because they let laymen and also women preach. 5. Because they preach in the streets. 6. Because they denounce vengeance and damnation against sinners. 7. Because they contend for absolute perfection in this life. 8. Because they pretend to be always guided by the Holy Ghost. And, 9. Because they hold the doctrine of community of goods.

The same abusive but vigorously written paper contains an attack upon the poor Methodists, by Hooker, the editor, begun in the number for March 14, and continued weekly until June 27, when this scolding periodical came to a well deserved termination. The following are a few selections:—

March 28.—Wesley pretends to cast out spirits from those whom he declares possessed of them; but he is "a grand, empty, inconsistent heretic; the ringleader, fomenter, and first cause of all the divisions, separations, factions, and feuds that have happened in Oxford, London, Bristol, and other places where he has been."

April 25.—Wesley rebaptizes adults, on the ground that, *really* they have never been baptized before, the baptism of infants by sprinkling being no true baptism in his esteem. When Whitefield returned from Georgia, he preached at the Foundery, taking for his text, "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you?" For this he was immediately excommunicated from the Foundery pulpit, lest the people should think

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that Wesley was a conjuror. "Everybody allows that there are above twenty, and some say forty, spinning wheels at the Foundery." "Wesley well knows how to breakfast with one of his devotees, dine with another, and sup with a third, all of which retrenches the charges of housekeeping at home. Those who sit in his gallery must subscribe five shillings a quarter, and those who stand, a penny a week. He who advances half-a-crown a quarter is admitted into the close society; and he who doubles that amount becomes a member of the bands, where men and women stay all night, but for what purpose is known only to God and to themselves. The price for resolving cases of conscience is threepence each. Wesley makes at least £50 by every edition of the hymns he publishes; and thus, by his preaching, his bookselling, his workhouse, his wheedling, and his sponging, it is generally believed that he gets an income of £700 a year, and some say above £1000. This," adds the mendacious editor, "is priest-craft in perfection."

May 9.—The writer speculates concerning what is likely to be the end of the Methodist movement. 1. Some think if the Methodists are let alone, they will, as a matter of course, fall to pieces. 2. Others think that the irreconcilable differences between Wesley and Whitefield will effect their ruin; for Whitefield has set up a conventicle of boards not far from Wesley's Foundery; and while one calls the other schismatic, the other in requital calls him a heretic. 3. Some think that their congregations, by neglecting their business and their work, will be reduced to beggary, and this, of course, will ruin all. 4. Lastly, others think their conduct will be such that the government will find it necessary to suppress them.

June 13.—Proposes the erection of a Methodist edifice on Blackheath. The foundation stone is to be the tombstone that prevented the resurrection of Dr. Emes, the famous French prophet. The principal entrance is to be adorned with statues of the most eminent field-preachers. The hall is to be decorated with a piece, in which the principal figure is to be Enthusiasm, sitting in an easy chair, and just delivered of two beauteous babes, the one called Superstition, and the other Infidelity. On her right hand must be a grisly old gen-

1741 Age 38 tleman with a cloven foot, holding the new born children in a receiver, which the Pope has blessed, and gazing upon them with most fatherly affection. The *pang room* of the building is to be for the accommodation of those seized with the pangs of the new birth. All who run mad about election must be lodged in the *predestination room*,—which, by the way, is likely to be well peopled, and therefore must be large, as well as dark and gloomy, and must be adorned with the evolutions, intricacies, and involutions of a rusty chain, held at one end by the Methodistic founder, and at the other by the devil. The *disputation room* is, like a cockpit, to be round as a hoop, so that the disputants may have the pleasure of disputing in a circle. The *expounding room* is to be adorned with a picture of the founder, with a pair of scissors in one hand and a Bible in the other; a motto over his reverend head, "Dividing the word of God;" and all round about scraps of paper supposed to be texts newly clipped from the sacred Scriptures. The *refectory* is to have a painting to represent Wesley, Whitefield, and C. Graves at supper, with Madam Bourignon presiding. Near her must be an ass's head boiled with sprouts and bacon; and, at the other end of the table, a dish of owls roasted and larded. Having already helped Whitefield to the jaw bone of the ass's head, and Wesley to the sweet tooth, she now gives Mr. Graves a spoonful of the brains and a bit of tongue, which he receives with a grateful bow. The foundation stone is to be laid on the first of April; and the procession to the site are to sing, not the psalms of David, for they are not half good enough, but a hymn of Wesley's own composing.

Ridicule like this was even worse than being pelted with brickbats and rotten eggs.

The two Wesleys and Whitefield were often roughly treated; and so also was John Cennick, the Methodist Moravian. At Swindon, the mob surrounded his congregation, rung a bell, blew a horn, and used a fire engine in drenching him and them with water. Guns were fired over the people's heads, and rotten eggs were plentiful.[1] At Hampton, near Gloucester, the rabble, chiefly soldiers, to annoy him, beat a drum and let

[1] *Weekly History*, No. 14.

off squibs and crackers. For an hour and a half, hog's wash and fœtid water were poured upon him and his congregation, who all the while stood perfectly still, in secret prayer, with their eyes and hands lifted up to heaven.[1] At Stratton, a crowd of furious men came, armed with weapons, clubs, and staves. Cudgels were used most unmercifully. Some of his congregation had blood streaming down their faces; others, chiefly women, were dragged away by the hair of their head. Sylvester Keen spat in the face of Cennick's sister, and beat her about the head, as if he meant to kill her. The mob bellowed and roared like maniacs; but Cennick kept on preaching and praying till he was violently pulled down; when he and his friends set out for Lineham, singing hymns, and followed by the crowd, who bawled—"You cheating dog, you pick-pocketing rogue, sell us a halfpenny ballad!"[2] 1741 Age 38

In the midst of such treatment, Methodism went on its way, and prospered. It is a remarkable fact, that, during 1741, there were no *stricken* cases, like those which occurred in 1739, excepting two at Bristol; but there were many signal seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. A man, who had been an atheist for twenty years, came to the Foundery to make sport, but was so convinced of sin, that he rested not until he found peace with God. At Bristol, on one occasion, "some wept aloud, some clapped their hands, some shouted, and the rest sang praise." In Charles Square, London, while a violent storm was raging, "their hearts danced for joy, praising 'the glorious God that maketh the thunder.'"

Two or three other important events, occurring in the year 1741, must be noticed.

At midsummer, Wesley spent about three weeks in Oxford. Here he inquired concerning the exercises requisite in order to become a Bachelor in Divinity. The Oxford Methodists were scattered. Out of twenty-five or thirty weekly communicants, only two were left; and not one continued to attend the daily prayers of the Church. Here he met with his old friend, Mr. Gambold, who told him he need be under no concern respecting his sermon before the university, which

[1] *Weekly History*, No. 15. [2] Ibid. No. 24.

1741 Age 38 he had come to preach, for the authorities would be utterly regardless of what he said. Here also he had a conversation with Richard Viney, originally a London tailor, but now the Oxford Moravian minister,—a man, as James Hutton tells us, whose person, delivery, and bearing prevented his sermons being acceptable to many, and yet a man, who, in this same year, was elected president of the society in Fetter Lane. Ultimately he removed to Broad Oaks, Essex, as the superintendent of the Moravian school; then, by casting lots, was condemned as an enemy of the work of God; and then joined Wesley's society at Birstal, which he so perverted, that they "laughed at all fasting, and self denial, and family prayer," and treated even John Nelson slightingly.[1]

Wesley preached his sermon at St. Mary's, on Saturday, July 25, to one of the largest congregations he had seen in Oxford. His text was: "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian;" and his two divisions, (1) what is implied in being *almost;* and (2) what in being *altogether*, a Christian. The sermon is one of the most faithful that Wesley ever preached. It was printed by W. Strahan, 12mo, pages 21, and was sold at twopence.

It is almost certain, however, that this was not the sermon that Wesley *meant* to preach. After his decease, a mutilated manuscript in English was found among his papers, dated "June 24, 1741" (a month before he preached at Oxford), and also a copy of the same in Latin. This was a discourse on the text, "How is the faithful city become an harlot!" There can be no question that the sermon was written with the design of being delivered before the university, and that, for some reason, the design for the present was abandoned. The sermon, if preached, must inevitably have brought upon the preacher the ire of his hearers. While admitting that the university had some who were faithful witnesses of gospel truth, Wesley alleges that, comparatively speaking, they were very few. To say nothing of deists, Arians, and Socinians, some of the chief champions of the faith were far from being faultless. Tillotson had published several sermons expressly to prove that, not *faith alone*, but *good works*, are necessary in order to

[1] Hutton's Memoirs.

justification; and the great Bishop Bull had taken the same position. Wesley then proceeds to attack the members of the university in a way, perhaps, not the most prudent. He asks if it is not a fact, that many of them "believe that a good moral man, and a good Christian, mean the same?" He continues:— 1741 Age 38

"Scarcely is the form of godliness seen among us. Take any one you meet; take a second, a third, a fourth, or the twentieth. Not one of them has even the appearance of a saint, any more than of an angel. Is there no needless visiting on the sabbath day? no trifling, no impertinence of conversation? And, on other days, are not the best of our conversing hours spent in foolish talking and jesting, nay, perhaps, in wanton talking too? Are there not many among us found to eat and drink with the drunken? Are not even the hours assigned for study too commonly employed in reading plays, novels, and idle tales? How many voluntary blockheads there are among us, whose ignorance is not owing to incapacity, but to mere laziness! How few, of the vast number, who have it in their power, are truly learned men! Who is there that can be said to understand Hebrew? Might I not say, or even Greek? O what is so scarce as learning, save religion!"[1]

The remainder of this remarkable sermon is in the same strain. Its allegations, we are afraid, were true; but the sermon was far too personal to be prudent, and Wesley exercised a wise discretion in exchanging it for the other.

During the year 1741, while in Wales, Wesley was seized with a serious illness. Hastening to Bristol, he was ordered, by Dr. Middleton, to go to bed,—"a strange thing to me," he writes, "who have not kept my bed a day for five-and-thirty years." A dangerous fever followed, and the Bristol society held a fast and offered prayer. For eight days, he hung between life and death; and, for three weeks, he was kept a prisoner, when, contrary to the advice given him, he resumed his work, and began to preach daily.

This was a long interval of enforced retirement for a man of Wesley's active temperament; but it was not unprofitably spent. As soon as he could, he began to read, and during his convalescence devoured half-a-dozen works. He read "the life of that truly good and great man, Mr. Philip Henry;" and "the life of Mr. Matthew Henry,—a man not to be de-

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. vii., p. 431.

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spised, either as a scholar or a Christian, though not equal to his father." He read "Mr. Laval's 'History of the Reformed Churches in France;' full of the most amazing instances of the wickedness of men, and of the goodness and power of God." He likewise read "Turretin's 'History of the Church,' a dry, heavy, barren treatise." He gave a second perusal to "Theologia Germanica," and asks, "O, how was it that I could ever so admire the affected obscurity of this unscriptural writer?" He also "read again, with great surprise, part of the 'Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius,'" and says, "so weak, credulous, thoroughly injudicious a writer have I seldom found."

Among the pamphlets published against Wesley, during 1741, was one entitled: "The Perfectionists Examined; or, Inherent Perfection in this Life, no Scripture Doctrine. By William Fleetwood, Gent." 8vo, 99 pages. Fleetwood asserts that, of all the open and professed enemies of the gospel, the Methodists are the worst; "they are more destructive to religion than the papists or Mahometans;" "by their artful insinuations, and outward sanctity, they have drawn numbers of *silly women* after them; they plainly show themselves to be some of those of whom the apostle Peter prophesied, 'Such as bring in damnable heresies, denying the Lord that bought them'"; "and are more like *French* enthusiasts, or rank papists, than true Christians." The reader must guess the rest.

Another opponent was Joseph Hart, who published a small work on "The Unreasonableness of Religion, being Remarks and Animadversions on Mr. John Wesley's Sermon on Romans viii. 32." Of all the enemies Wesley had, Joseph Hart was one of the most persisting, for he scarcely ever preached without endeavouring, more or less, to explode Wesley's doctrines, as tending to lead the people into dangerous delusions.[1]

Another pamphlet, octavo, 75 pages, published during the year 1741, was entitled: "The Doctrine of Justification by Faith, stated according to the Articles of the Church of England. By Arthur Bedford, M.A., Chaplain to His Royal

[1] "Friendly Remarks," published in 1772.

Highness the Prince of Wales." This was written at the request of "a member of the religious societies in London," who told the author, that, "there had been great disputes among them lately concerning this doctrine; some having advanced faith so high, as to make no necessity of a good life; and others having advanced works so high, as to make faith to consist only in a general belief, that the New Testament is the word of God." The pamphlet is an able production, and is temperately written. To most of its sentiments, Wesley himself would have raised no objection. 1741 Age 38

It only remains to notice Wesley's own publications during 1741.[1]

Probably the first was his sermon, entitled, "Christian Perfection." He writes: "I think it was in the latter end of the year 1740, that I had a conversation with Dr. Gibson, then bishop of London, at Whitehall. He asked me what I meant by perfection. I told him without any disguise or reserve. When I ceased speaking, he said, 'Mr. Wesley, if this be all you mean, publish it to all the world.' I answered, 'My lord, I will'; and accordingly wrote and published the sermon on Christian perfection."[2]

The two divisions of this important sermon are: (1) in what sense Christians *are not*, and (2) in what sense they *are, perfect*. Wesley shows that no one is so perfect in this life, as to be free from ignorance, from mistakes, from infirmities, and from temptations. On the other hand, he proves that the perfect Christian is freed from outward sin; from evil thoughts; and from evil tempers. The sermon is elaborate, and has affixed to it Charles Wesley's hymn on "The Promise of Sanctification," consisting of twenty-eight stanzas, and beginning with the line,—"God of all power, and truth, and grace."

Another of Wesley's publications was, "A Collection of Psalms and Hymns." Hitherto, all the hymn-books, except the first, had borne, on the title-page, the names of both the brothers; but this has the name of Wesley only.

A third was, "A Dialogue between a Predestinarian and

[1] His sermon before the university has been mentioned already.
[2] Wesley's Works, vol. xi., p. 359.

1741 Age 38 his Friend." 12mo, eight pages. The object of this short tract is to show, from the writings of Piscator, Calvin, Zanchius, and others, that predestinarianism teaches, that God causes reprobates to sin, and creates them on purpose to be damned.[1]

Besides the above, Wesley published four abridgments from other works.

1. "The Scripture Doctrine concerning Predestination, Election, and Reprobation." 12mo, 16 pages.

2. "Serious Considerations on Absolute Predestination." 12mo, 24 pages. The tract proves, that the doctrine of absolute predestination is objectionable (1) because it makes God the author of sin; (2) because, it makes Him delight in the death of sinners; (3) because, it is highly injurious to Christ our Mediator; (4) because, it makes the preaching of the gospel a mere mock and illusion; etc.

3. "An Extract of the Life of Monsieur De Renty, a late Nobleman of France." 12mo, pages 67. De Renty usually rose at five o'clock; communicated every day; and spent his time in devotion and doing good. For several years he ate but one meal a day, and even that was scanty and always of the poorest food. He often passed the night in a chair, instead of in bed, or would lie down upon a bench in his clothes and boots. He parted with several books, because richly bound; and carried no silver about him, but for works of charity. When his mother took from him a large portion of his property, he caused the *Te Deum* to be sung, beginning it himself. He was wont to say, "I carry about with me ordinarily a plenitude of the presence of the Holy Trinity." In visiting the sick, he would kindle their fires, make their beds, and set in order their little

[1] It was hardly honest of Wesley to publish this without a word of acknowledgment as to its author and origin. We have compared it with "A Dialogue between the Baptist and Presbyterian; wherein the Presbyterians are punished, by their own pens, for their cruel and self-devouring doctrines, making God the ordainer of all the sins of men and devils, and reprobating the greatest part of mankind without any help of salvation. By Thomas Grantham, Messenger of the Baptized Churches in Lincolnshire. London: 1691." 4to, pages 18; and have no hesitancy in saying, that Wesley's Dialogue, abridged and altered, is taken from that of Grantham.

household stuff. His zeal for the salvation of men was boundless. "I am ready," said he, "to serve all men, not excepting one, and to lay down my life for any one." He established numbers of societies at Caen and other places, for the purpose of Christians assisting one another in working out both their own and their neighbours' salvation. He died at Paris, in the thirty-seventh year of his age, on April 24, 1649. De Renty was, in Wesley's estimation, a model saint. 1741 Age 38

4. The fourth and last abridgment published, in 1741, was entitled, "Reflections upon the Conduct of Human Life, with reference to Learning and Knowledge." 12mo, pages 36. This was extracted from a work written by Dr. John Norris, an old friend of Wesley's father, and one of the principal contributors to the *Athenian Gazette*.[1]

The tract, throughout, is in a high degree rich and racy, and well worth reading. It unquestionably contains the great principles which guided Wesley in all his reading, writing, publishing of books, and educational efforts in general. He considered all kinds of knowledge useful; but, some being much more so than others, he devoted to them time and attention accordingly; and made the whole subordinate to the great purpose of human existence,—the glory of God, and the happiness of man. We finish the present chapter with a few sentences culled from the conclusion of this threepenny production :—

"I cannot, with any patience, reflect, that, out of so short a time as human life, consisting, it may be, of fifty or sixty years, nineteen or twenty shall be spent in hammering out a little Latin and Greek, and in learning a company of poetical fictions and fantastic stories. If one were to judge of the life of man by the proportion of it spent at school, one would think the antediluvian mark were not yet out. Besides, the things taught in seminaries are often frivolous. How many excellent and useful things might be learnt, while boys are thumbing and murdering Hesiod and Homer? Of what signification is such stuff as this, to the accomplishment of a reasonable soul? What improvement can it be to my understanding, to know the amours of *Pyramus* and *Thisbe*, or of *Hero* and *Leander*? Let any man but consider human nature, and tell me whether he thinks a boy is fit to be trusted with Ovid? And yet, to books such as these our youth is dedicated, and in these some of us

[1] See "Life and Times of Rev. S. Wesley," p. 136.

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employ our riper years; and, when we die, this makes one part of our funeral eulogy; though, according to the principles before laid down, we should have been as pertinently and more innocently employed all the while, if we had been picking straws in Bedlam. The measure of prosecuting learning is its usefulness to good life; and, consequently, all prosecution of it beyond or beside this end, is impertinent and immoderate. For my own part, I am so thoroughly convinced of the certainty of the principles here propounded, that I look upon myself as under almost a necessity of conducting my studies by them, and intend to study nothing at all but what serves to the advancement of piety and good life. I have spent about thirteen years in the most celebrated university in the world, in pursuing both such learning as the academical standard requires, and as my private genius inclined me to; but I intend to spend my uncertain remainder of time in studying only what makes for the moral improvement of my mind, and the regulation of my life. More particularly, I shall apply myself to read such books as are rather persuasive than instructive; such as warm, kindle, and enlarge the affections, and awaken the Divine sense in the soul; being convinced, by every day's experience, that I have more need of heat than light; though were I for more light, still I think the love of God is the best light of the soul of man."

This is a long extract; but it is of some consequence, as furnishing a key to the whole of Wesley's literary pursuits—from this, the commencement of his Methodist career, to the end of his protracted life. His aim was not to shine in scholarship, but to live a life of goodness.

WESLEY now began to enlarge the sphere of his operations. Hitherto, his only stated congregations had been at Kingswood, at Bristol, and at the Foundery, London. For these, the ministrations of himself and his brother were sufficient; but, as the work increased, new preachers became needful. Cennick and Humphreys had both left him; but others supplied their places. John Nelson came to London, was converted, and, at the end of the year 1740, returned to Birstal in Yorkshire, where, impelled by the love of Christ, and almost without knowing it, he began to preach to his unconverted neighbours. Thomas Maxfield also, one of the first converts in Bristol, and who, for a year or two, seems to have travelled with Charles Wesley, perhaps in the capacity of servant, being left in London, to meet during Wesley's absence the Foundery society, pray with them, and give them suitable advice, was insensibly led from praying to preaching, — his sermons being accompanied with such power, that numbers were made penitent and were converted. Wesley, hearing of this irregularity, hurried back to London, for the purpose of stopping it. His mother, living in his house, adjoining the Foundery, said: "John, take care what you do with respect to that young man, for he is as surely called of God to preach, as you are. Examine what have been the fruits of his preaching, and hear him yourself." The Countess of Huntingdon also wrote: "Maxfield is one of the greatest instances of God's peculiar favour that I know. He is my astonishment. The first time I made him expound, I expected little from him; but, before he had gone over one fifth part of his discourse, my attention was riveted, and I was immovable. His power in prayer, also, is very extraordinary." [1]

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Wesley was convinced, and the Rubicon was passed. "I am

[1] See lives of Wesley, by Whitehead and Moore.

1742 Age 39 not clear," he writes under the date of April 21, 1741, "that brother Maxfield should not expound at Greyhound Lane; nor can I as yet do without him. Our clergymen" (Stonehouse, Hall, and others) "have miscarried full as much as the laymen; and that the Moravians are other than laymen, I know not."[1] Wesley wrote again, about four years after employing Maxfield:—

"I am bold to affirm, that these unlettered men have help from God for the great work of saving souls from death. But, indeed, in the one thing which they profess to know, they are not ignorant men. I trust there is not one of them, who is not able to go through such an examination, in substantial, practical, experimental divinity, as few of our candidates for holy orders, even in the university, are able to do. In answer to the objection, that they are laymen, I reply, the scribes of old, who were the ordinary preachers among the Jews, were not priests; they were not better than laymen. Yea, many of them were incapable of the priesthood, being not of the tribe of Levi. Hence, probably, it was, that the Jews themselves never urged it as an objection to our Lord's preaching, that He was no priest after the order of Aaron; nor, indeed, could be; seeing He was of the tribe of Judah. Nor does it appear that any objected this to the apostles. If we come to later times, was Mr. Calvin ordained? Was he either priest or deacon? And were not most of those whom it pleased God to employ in promoting the Reformation abroad, laymen also? Could that great work have been promoted at all, in many places, if laymen had not preached? In all Protestant churches, ordination is not held a necessary pre-requisite of preaching; for in Sweden, in Germany, in Holland, and, I believe, in every Reformed church in Europe, it is not only permitted, but required, that, before any one is ordained, he shall publicly preach a year or more *ad probandum facultatem*. And, for this practice, they believe they have an express command of God; 'let those first be proved, then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless' (1 Tim. iii. 10). Besides, in how many churches, in England, does the parish clerk read one of the lessons, and in some the whole service of the Church, perhaps every Lord's day? And do not other laymen constantly do the same thing in our very cathedrals? which, being under the inspection of the bishops, should be patterns to all other churches. Nay, is it not done in the universities themselves? Who ordained that singing man at Christ Church; who is likewise utterly unqualified for the work, murdering every lesson he reads; not endeavouring to read it as the word of God, but rather as an old song?"

Where is the priest, pretending that preaching belongs exclusively to those in orders, who can answer such arguments

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 102.

as these? But Wesley's case was stronger than even this. He proceeds to relate that, after God had used him and his brother clergymen, in several places, in turning many from a course of sin to a course of holiness, the ministers of these places, instead of receiving them with open arms, spoke of them "as if the devil, not God, had sent them; and represented them as fellows not fit to live,—papists, heretics, traitors, conspirators against their king and country;" while the people, who had been converted by their preaching, were "driven from the Lord's table, and were openly cursed in the name of God." What could be done in a case like this? "No clergyman would assist at all. The expedient that remained was, to find some one among themselves, who was upright of heart, and of sound judgment in the things of God; and to desire him to meet the rest as often as he could, in order to confirm, as he was able, in the ways of God, either by reading to them, or by prayer, or by exhortation." 1742 Age 39

This was done, and God blessed it. "In several places, by means of these unlettered men, not only those who had already begun to run well were hindered from drawing back to perdition; but other sinners also, from time to time, were converted from the error of their ways."

"This plain account," continues Wesley, "of the whole proceeding, I take to be the best defence of it. I know no scripture which forbids making use of such help, in a case of such necessity. And I praise God who has given even this help to those poor sheep, when 'their own shepherds pitied them not.'"

Brave-hearted Wesley! The step he took was momentous; but he was a match for all opposers; and marvellous is the fact that the very Church, which so branded him for such a departure from Church order, is now actually copying his example. Notable, in future years, will be the incident, which has almost passed without being noticed, that, in the month of May, 1869, in his own private chapel, at London House, Dr. Jackson, Bishop of London, formally authorised eight laymen "to read prayers, and to read and *explain* the Holy Scriptures," and "to conduct religious services for the poor in schools, and mission rooms, and in the open air," in the

1742 Age 39 London diocese, with the understanding and agreement that their labours will be rendered gratuitously.[1] Thus are even bishops treading in the once hated footsteps of the great Methodist.

In 1742, Wesley's itinerating commenced in earnest. During the year, he spent about twenty-four weeks in London and its vicinity; fourteen in Bristol and the surrounding neighbourhood; one in Wales; and thirteen in making two tours to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, taking, on his way, Donnington Park, Birstal, Halifax, Dewsbury, Mirfield, Epworth, Sheffield, and other towns and villages adjoining these.

Whitefield spent the first two months in Bristol, Gloucester, and the west of England, and the three following in London. He then went to Scotland, where he continued until the end of October, when he returned to London for the remainder of the year.

Wesley and he were again friends. On April 23, Wesley writes: "I spent an agreeable hour with Mr. Whitefield. I believe he is sincere in all he says, concerning his earnest desire of joining hand in hand with all that love the Lord Jesus Christ. But if, as some would persuade me, he is not, the loss is all on his own side. I am just as I was. I go on my way, whether he goes with me or stays behind."

This interview took place at Easter, a season of the year which Moorfields was wont to keep with uproarious hilarity. On this occasion, the spacious rendezvous was filled, from end to end, with mountebanks, players, drummers, trumpeters, merryandrews, and menageries. Whitefield mounted his field pulpit, and from twenty to thirty thousand people flocked around him. He became a target, at which were hurled dirt, dead cats, stones, and rotten eggs. A fool belonging to one of the puppetshows attempted to lash him with a whip; and a recruiting sergeant, with his drum and other musical instruments, marched through his congregation; but Whitefield, for three hours, continued praying, preaching, and singing; and then retired to the Tabernacle, with his pocket full of notes from persons who had been awakened by his sermon,

[1] *Standard* newspaper, May 22, 1869.

and which were read amid the praises and acclamations of assembled crowds. A thousand such papers had been sent to him; and three hundred and fifty of the inquiring penitents were received into church fellowship in a single day.[1] 1742 Age 39

Wesley and Whitefield henceforth were divided, and yet united. Each pursued his own separate course; but their hearts were one. Their creeds were different; but not their aims. "Mr. Wesley," writes Whitefield in 1742, "I think is wrong in some things; but I believe he will shine bright in glory. I have not given way to him, or to any, whom I thought in error, no not for an hour; but I think it best not to dispute, where there is no probability of convincing."[2] And again, in a letter to Wesley himself, on October 11, 1742, he says: "I had your kind letter, dated October 5. In answer to the first part of it, I say, 'Let old things pass away, and all things become new.' I can also heartily say 'Amen' to the latter part of it—'Let the king live for ever and controversy die.' It has died with me long ago. I thank you, dear sir, for praying for me. I have been upon my knees praying for you and yours, and that nothing but love, lowliness, and simplicity may be among us!"[3]

To the day of his death, Whitefield breathed this loving spirit, and rejoiced to find reciprocal affection in his friend Wesley. After this, we shall refrain from adverting to his history more than we find needful,—not for want of admiration of his character and labours, but because it is impossible, in casual notices, to do him justice. He was still hounded as much as ever by the dogs of persecution. Though he was now in Scotland, where, if anywhere, his Calvinistic doctrines were likely to gain him favour, yet even there he met with virulent opposers. Among other extremely bitter pamphlets published against him, in 1742, was one printed at Edinburgh, "by a true lover of the Church and country," who represented him as taking upon himself "the office of a thirteenth apostle," and concluded his courteous outpouring thus: "Let all good people beware of this stroller, for he will yet find a way to wheedle you out of your money. He is as artful a mounte-

[1] Whitefield's Works, vol. i., p. 386. [2] Ibid. vol. i., p. 438.
[3] Ibid. vol. i., p. 449.

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bank as any I know." Another pamphlet, entitled "The Declaration of the True Presbyterians, within the Kingdom of Scotland, concerning Mr. George Whitefield and the work at Cambuslang," begun as follows:—"The declaration, protestation, and testimony of the suffering remnant of the anti-popish, anti-Lutheran, anti-prelatic, anti-Whitefieldian, anti-Erastian, anti-sectarian, true Presbyterian church of Christ in Scotland;" and then this windy performance, of thirty-two pages, proceeds to say that Whitefield is "an abjured, prelatic hireling, of as lax toleration principles as any that ever set up for the advancing the kingdom of Satan. He is a wandering star, who steers his course according to the compass of gain and advantage." A third publication, issued in 1742, was, "A Warning against countenancing the ministrations of Mr. George Whitefield, wherein is shown that Mr. Whitefield is no minister of Jesus Christ; that his call and coming to Scotland are scandalous; that his practice is disorderly and fertile of disorder; and that his whole doctrine is, and his success must be, diabolical. By Adam Gib, minister of the gospel at Edinburgh." In this sweet effusion of seventy-five pages, poor Whitefield is solemnly pronounced to be "one of those false Christs, of whom the church is forewarned, Matt. xxiv. 24." After reviewing some of Whitefield's tenets, Mr. Adam Gib deliciously remarks: "in raking through this dunghill of Mr. Whitefield's doctrine, we have raised as much *stink* as will suffocate all his followers, that shall venture to draw near without stopping their noses." "The complex scheme of his doctrine is diabolical; it proceeds through diabolical influence, and is applied unto a diabolical use, against the Mediator's glory and the salvation of men." This was pretty strong for a young man, twenty-nine years of age, and who, four years afterwards, became the leader of the party known by the name of Anti-burghers. We are prepared, by such pious venom, for the fact, that, in the year following, when the "associate presbytery met for renewing the national covenant of Scotland, and the solemn league and covenant of the three nations," they drew up and printed "a confession of the sins of the ministry," in which they humble themselves before God, for not "timeously" warning the people against Whitefield; for being "too remiss in their endeavours to

prevent the sad effects of his ministrations;" for being "too little affected by the latitudinarian principles and awful delusions which he had propagated;" and for not "crying to God, that He would rebuke the devourer, and cast the false prophet and the unclean spirit out of the land." [1] 1742 Age 31

Despite all this, Whitefield cheerily pursued the path marked out by Providence. Few men have been more entitled to the last beatitude in our Saviour's sermon, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake."

It was through the timely interposition of Howel Harris, that the friendship between Wesley and Whitefield was resumed. Towards this warmhearted Welshman Wesley cherished the most sincere affection, and, on the 6th of August, 1742, wrote to him as follows:—

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I have just read yours, dated at Trevecca, October 19, 1741. And what is it that we contend about? Allow such a perfection as you have there described, and all further dispute I account vain jangling and mere strife of words. As to the other point, we agree: (1) that no man can have any power except it be given him from above; (2) that no man can merit anything but hell, seeing all other merit is in the blood of the Lamb. For those two fundamental points, both you and I earnestly contend; what need, then, of this great gulf to be fixed between us? Brother, is thy heart with mine, as my heart is with thine? If it be, give me thy hand. I am indeed a poor, foolish, sinful worm; and how long my Lord will use me, I know not. I sometimes think the time is coming when He will lay me aside. For surely never before did He send such a labourer into such a harvest. But, so long as I am continued in the work, let us rise up together against the evil-doers; let us not weaken, but strengthen one another's hands in God. My brother, my soul is gone forth to meet thee; let us fall upon one another's neck. The good Lord blot out all that is past, and let there henceforward be peace between me and thee!

"I am, my dear brother, ever yours,

"JOHN WESLEY."[2]

Another of Wesley's friends, at this period, was the Rev. Henry Piers, vicar of Bexley, a devoted man, who, through the instrumentality of Charles Wesley and Mr. Bray, had found peace with God on the 10th of June, 1738. He at once began

[1] Act of the Associate Presbytery, 1744.
[2] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 152.

1742 Age 39 to preach, with great fidelity, the scriptural method of salvation; and such was his success, that in August, 1739, Whitefield assisted him in administering the sacrament, in Bexley church, to nearly six hundred communicants. Keziah Wesley was an inmate of his house; and Wesley himself was a welcome visitor. He was one of the six persons who composed Wesley's first Conference, in 1744; and one of the three who publicly walked with Wesley from the church of St. Mary's, Oxford, when he preached, for the last time, before the university.

In 1742, the vicar of Bexley was appointed to preach at Sevenoaks, "before the right worshipful the Dean of the Arches, and the reverend the clergy of the deanery of Shoreham, assembled in visitation." The text chosen by Mr. Piers was 1 Corinthians iv. 1, 2; and his object was to show what doctrines ministers ought to preach, and also what ought to be their tempers and behaviour. A letter to Wesley, written May 24, three days after the sermon was delivered, states that, at the beginning of his discourse, Piers was listened to with gravity; but, while dwelling upon the doctrines of the Church, his reverend auditors began to indulge in "shrewd looks and indignant smiles"; this was followed with "laughter and loud whispers," some of them saying, "Piers is mad, crazy, and a fool." When he came to the application of his discourse, and asked whether the clergy preached such doctrines, possessed such tempers, and led such lives, the ordinary would endure it no longer, but beckoned to the apparitor to open his pew door, and to the minister of Sevenoaks church to command Piers to stop. The minister made a sign to the preacher, but without effect. The ordinary then publicly desired Piers to pronounce the benediction, as the congregation had already heard quite enough. Piers, however, still went on; all the clergy, except one or two, walked out; and the preacher, without further interruption, finished his discourse to an attentive audience.[1]

The sermon, though written by Mr. Piers, was, previous to its being preached, revised by Wesley;[2] and, in September

[1] Jackson's Life of C. Wesley.
[2] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 103.

ensuing, was published, price sixpence,[1] with a list of the books sold by Wesley at the Foundery in Moorfields, inserted. The sermon, in point of fact, was a joint production of Wesley and his friend. Any one, comparing it with other sermons published by Mr. Piers, will perceive an unmistakable difference in style, and force of expression. The sermon was, to a great extent, Wesley's; and, in this instance, Wesley was almost preaching by proxy. 1742 Age 39

Wesley longed for helpers; but, conscious that none would be useful unless converted, he was careful in accepting offers. Of his friend Piers he could have no doubt; but it was otherwise with respect to a clergyman from America, who called upon him at the beginning of the year, and "appeared full of good desires." Wesley writes: "I cannot suddenly answer in this matter; I must first know what spirit he is of; for none can labour with us, unless he 'count all things dung and dross, that he may win Christ.'" With Wesley, neither learning, nor talent, nor even orders, nor all combined, were sufficient to induce him to accept a helper, unless there was also piety. Purity in preachers is of more importance than either scholarship, or genius, or both united. The former is an essential, without which no man ought to preach; the latter are, at the best, but useful in helping a preacher to preach successfully.

In a certain sense, Methodist societies were begun in 1739; but it was not until 1742 that they were divided into classes. In January, 1739, the London society, which was really Moravian, and not Methodist, consisted of about sixty persons. Three months after that, Wesley went to Bristol, where "a few persons agreed to meet weekly, with the same intention as those in London"; and these were soon increased by "several little societies, which were already meeting in divers parts of the city," amalgamating with them. About the same time similar societies were formed at Kingswood and at Bath.[2] These religious communities grew and multiplied. At the beginning of 1742, the London society alone, after repeated siftings, numbered about eleven hundred members.[3] Hitherto,

[1] *London Magazine*, 1742, p. 468.
[2] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 292. [3] Ibid. vol. i., p. 335.

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Wesley and his brother had been their only pastors; but, on February 15, 1742, an accident led to a momentous alteration. Nearly three years before, Wesley had built his meeting-house in Bristol; but, notwithstanding the subscriptions and collections made at the time to defray the expense, a large debt was still unpaid. On the day mentioned, some of the principal members of the Bristol society met together to consult how their pecuniary obligations should be discharged. One of them stood up and said, "Let every member of the society give a penny a week, till the debt is paid." Another answered, "Many of them are poor, and cannot afford to do it." "Then," said the former, "put eleven of the poorest with me; and if they can give anything, well; I will call on them weekly; and if they can give nothing, I will give for them as well as for myself. And each of you call on eleven of your neighbours weekly; receive what they give, and make up what is wanting." "It was done," writes Wesley; "and in a while, some of these informed me, they found such and such an one did not live as he ought. It struck me immediately, 'This is the thing, the very thing, we have wanted so long.'"

What was the result? Wesley called together these weekly collectors of money to pay the debt on the Bristol chapel, and desired each, in addition to collecting money, to make particular inquiry into the behaviour of the members whom they visited. They did so. Many disorderly walkers were detected; and thus the society was purged of unworthy members.[1]

Within six weeks after this, on March 25, Wesley introduced the same plan in London; where he had long found it difficult to become acquainted with all the members personally. He requested "several earnest and sensible men to meet him," to whom he explained his difficulty. They all agreed that, "to come to a sure, thorough knowledge of each member, there could be no better way than to divide the society into classes, like those at Bristol." Wesley, at once, appointed, as leaders, "those in whom he could most confide"; and thus, after an existence of three years, the Methodist societies were

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. viii., p. 243.

divided into classes, in 1742. "This," says Wesley, "was the origin of our classes, for which I can never sufficiently praise God; the unspeakable usefulness of the institution having ever since been more and more manifest."[1] 1742 Age 39

At first, the leaders visited each member at his own house; but this was soon found to be inconvenient. It required more time than the leaders had to spare; and many members lived with masters, mistresses, or relations, where it was almost impossible for such visits to be made. Hence, before long, it was agreed, that each leader should meet his apportioned members all together, once a week, at a time and place most convenient for the whole. The leader began and ended each meeting with singing and prayer, and spent about an hour in conversing with those present, one by one.[2]

Thus class-meetings began. Wesley writes, "It can scarce be conceived what advantages have been reaped by this little prudential regulation. Many now experienced that Christian fellowship, of which they had not so much as an idea before. They began to bear one another's burdens, and naturally to care for each other's welfare. And as they had daily a more intimate acquaintance, so they had a more endeared affection for each other. Upon reflection, I could not but observe, this is the very thing which was from the beginning of Christianity. As soon as any Jews or heathen were so convinced of the truth, as to forsake sin, and seek the gospel of salvation, the first preachers immediately joined them together; took an account of their names; advised them to watch over each other; and met these κατηχουμενοι, *catechumens*, as they were then called, apart from the great congregation, that they might instruct, rebuke, exhort, and pray with them, and for them, according to their several necessities."[3]

Such is Wesley's own account of the origin of these weekly

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. i., p. 342.
[2] Whitehead's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 148.
[3] Whitehead's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 149. This was not altogether novel. Nearly a hundred years previously, under the auspices of Nicholas Pavillon, the Bishop of Alet, in the south of France, there had sprung up "The Society of Regents," one of whose meetings was for exhortation and free spiritual conversation, and in which each person, who was so inclined, related her experience, or asked advice. See "Life of Nicholas Pavillon": 1869.

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meetings. Some of the old members were, at first, extremely averse to this new arrangement, regarding it, not as a privilege, but rather a restraint. They objected, that there were no such meetings when they joined the society, and asked why such meetings should be instituted now. To this Wesley answered, that he regarded class-meetings not essential, nor of Divine institution, but merely prudential helps, which it was a pity the society had not been favoured with from the beginning. "We are always open to instruction," says he to these complainants, "willing to be wiser every day than we were before, and to change whatever we can change for the better."

Another objection was, "There is no scripture for classes." Wesley replied, that there was no scripture against them; and that, in point of fact, there was much scripture for them, namely, texts which enjoined the substance of the thing, leaving indifferent circumstances to be determined by reason and experience.

The most plausible objection of all, however, was that which is often urged at the present day. Wesley writes: "They spoke far more plausibly who said, 'The thing is well enough in itself; but the leaders have neither gifts nor graces for such an employment.' I answer—(1) Yet such leaders as they are, it is plain God has blessed their labour. (2) If any of these is remarkably wanting in gifts or grace, he is soon taken notice of and removed. (3) If you know any such, tell it to me, not to others, and I will endeavour to exchange him for a better. (4) It may be hoped they will all be better than they are, both by experience and observation, and by the advices given them by the minister every Tuesday night, and the prayers (then in particular) offered up for them."[1]

The appointment of these leaders was of vast importance; but it was not sufficient. Wesley continues: "As the society increased, I found it required still greater care to separate the precious from the vile. In order to this, I determined, at least once in every three months, to talk with every member myself, and to inquire at their own mouths, whether they grew in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. viii., p. 246.

At these seasons, I likewise particularly inquire whether there be any misunderstanding or difference among them; that every hindrance of peace and brotherly love may be taken out of the way."[1] 1742 Age 39

Nothing need be added to this full account of the origin of the class-meeting and the quarterly visitation of the Methodists. Wesley, from the beginning, "recognised the scriptural distinction between the church and the world. The men who possessed religion, and the men who possessed it not, were not for a moment confounded. They might be neighbours in locality, and friends in goodwill; but they were wide as the poles asunder in sentiment. The quick and the dead may be placed side by side; but no one can, for ever so short a period, mistake dead flesh for living fibre. The church and the churchyard are close by; but the worshippers in the one and the dwellers in the other are as unlike as two worlds can make them. The circle within the circle, the company of the converted, Wesley always distinguished from the mass of mankind, and made special provision for their edification in all his organisms."[2]

After the formation of classes, the next event in point of importance, in the year 1742, was Wesley's visit to the north of England. A combination of circumstances led to this.

John Nelson had been converted among the Methodists in London, and had returned to Birstal, in Yorkshire, where Benjamin Ingham had already founded a number of flourishing Moravian brotherhoods. Nelson began to preach in the towns of Yorkshire; his labours were greatly blessed; and many of the greatest profligates, blasphemers, drunkards, and sabbath-breakers were entirely changed. John had often invited Wesley to visit Yorkshire, and this was one of the reasons of his setting out.[3]

Another was, that the Countess of Huntingdon had earnestly urged him to proceed to Newcastle, and to employ his best efforts to improve the moral and religious condition of the colliers on the Tyne. The letter, containing this request,

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. viii., p. 247.
[2] "Principles and Career of Wesley," by Dr. Dobbin.
[3] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 294.

1742 Age 39 has not been published, but is in the possession of the Rev. James Everett.

The countess was now resident at Donnington Park, the favourite home of her noble husband, the Earl of Huntingdon, who, like herself, treated ministers of Christ with every mark of polite attention. His sisters, Lady Betty Hastings, and Lady Margaret, (who afterwards became the wife of Ingham,) had been converted through the instrumentality of the Methodists, and were now sincere and earnest Christians. Donnington became a sort of rallying place for Christian ministers and Christian people. Mr. Simpson and Mr. Graves, two converted clergymen, resided in the neighbourhood. David Taylor, one of the servants of the Earl of Huntingdon, had commenced preaching in the surrounding hamlets and villages, and had begun a work which resulted in the forming of the New Connexion of General Baptists. Miss Fanny Cooper, residing with the countess, and dying of consumption, was greatly beloved by Wesley, and wished to see him.[1] All these circumstances had to do with his setting out for the midland counties, for Yorkshire, and for Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

On the 9th of January, Lady Huntingdon wrote to him, saying, that Miss Cooper was waiting for the consolation of Israel with an indescribable firmness of faith and hope. She had read his Journal, which he had sent for her perusal, and thought there was nothing in it which ought to be left out; and that the manner in which he spoke of himself could not be mended.[2]

In another letter, dated the 15th of March, she tells him that she is sure he is a chosen vessel set for the defence of the gospel; that she has given up the school at Markfield; that John Taylor is gone to be an assistant to David Taylor, and to become a schoolmaster among the people who had been converted; and that Mr. Graves had been blessed by Wesley's conversation, and greatly loved him.[3]

In a third letter, dated ten days later, Wesley is informed that John Taylor is about to wait upon him, and to say that,

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1856, p. 332; and "Life and Times of Countess of Huntingdon."

[2] *Methodist Magazine*, 1798, p. 490.

[3] Ibid. 1798, p. 642.

unless David Taylor (who had contracted an ill judged marriage, and fallen into the German stillness) transferred his flock to Wesley and his brother Charles, the countess would withdraw from him her support and countenance. She adds: "I would not trust David with the guidance of my soul, no, not for worlds. I find he is going to build himself a room, and to break with the ministers, and become a lay preacher. He has more pride than I ever saw in man. If he will commit his poor sheep into your hands, I will assist in the room, school, etc.; but else will I do nothing. You are much mistaken about the bishops not reading what you publish; I know they do. Let me know in your next if you approve what I have done about David."[1] 1742 Age 39

Six weeks afterwards, Lady Huntingdon wrote again, saying that Miss Cooper was at the point of death, and wished to see Wesley; and that a horse had been ordered for John Taylor to go down with him.[2] On receiving this, Wesley started almost immediately. He reached Donnington Park on May 22; found Miss Cooper just alive; spent three days with her and the countess, rejoicing in the grace of God; and then set out for Birstal, still accompanied by John Taylor.[3] On arriving at Birstal, Wesley went to an inn and sent for John Nelson; and John came and carried him to his own humble home. Thus was the aristocratic mansion exchanged for the mason's cottage. Numbers had been converted by John's plain, blunt preaching; but, because he advised them to go to church and sacrament, Ingham reproved him, and forbade the members of his societies to hear him.

Ingham, to some extent at least, had fallen into the dangerous delusions of the Moravians. He had also exposed himself to suspicions of another kind. Dr. Doddridge, in a letter written a fortnight before Wesley's visit to Birstal, says: "I am much surprised with a book, called the 'Country Parson's Advice to a Parishioner,' which is circulated, with extreme diligence, by Ingham, and other Methodists in our

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1845, p. 1073.
[2] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 103.
[3] A day or two afterwards Miss Cooper peacefully exchanged earth for heaven.

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part of the country. It artfully disguises, but most evidently contains and recommends, almost all the doctrines of popery, and none more than that fatal one of consigning conscience and fortune into the hands of the priesthood.[1] I am not hasty to smell out a Jesuit, and ever thought the Methodists had more honesty than wisdom; but this certain fact surprises me, and I should be glad of a key to it. It may be said, that they have generally appeared men of plain understandings, void of that art and learning necessary for missionaries; but all plots require tools, and have underparts, nor may these always be let into the whole design. On the whole, while they are diffusing such sentiments, Protestantism and our free constitution may have as little reason to thank them as learning and reason have already."[2]

Wesley preached, on May 26, at noon, on the top of Birstal hill; spent the afternoon in conversing with Nelson's converts; and, at eight at night, preached on Dewsbury moor, two miles from Birstal, and, in opposition to the Moravian tenets, "earnestly exhorted all who believed, to wait upon God in His ways, and to let their light shine before men."

His labours were not without success. One of his hearers was Nathaniel Harrison, a young man twenty-three years of age, who soon after was made circuit steward, an office which he filled for more than twenty years, and during a long life encountered no small amount of brutal persecution for the sake of his great Master. His father turned him out of doors; his eldest brother horsewhipped him; and the mob hurled missiles at his head, and, on one occasion, were literally bespattered with his blood. Nathaniel Harrison was a happy Christian, and attained to the age of eighty years before he died; he was wont to say, "My soul is always on the wing, I only wait the summons."[3]

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[1] "The Country Parson's Advice to his Parishioners," is an octavo volume of 215 pages, and was first published in 1680. It consists of two parts:—(1) An exhortation to a religious and virtuous life. (2) General directions for such a life. The book, as a whole, is well written, and useful; but the last chapter is exceedingly objectionable. It unmistakably teaches apostolical succession, confession, priestly absolution, and other favourite dogmas of the high church party of the present day.

[2] Doddridge's Correspondence, vol. iv., p. 86.

[3] *Methodist Magazine*, 1801, p. 531.

Another of Wesley's hearers was John Murgatroyd, a weaver, who became a member of the second class which was formed in Yorkshire; was present when John Nelson was pressed for a soldier; and was one of those brave-hearted Methodists who sang songs of praise at the door of Nelson's prison. He lived to have ten children, fifty-one grandchildren, and twenty-one great grandchildren; and, after being sixty-three years a Methodist, he peacefully breathed his last breath at Wansford, in the east of Yorkshire, having, on the day before, attended three public services, and sung the praises of his Saviour with an animation which seemed to evince that he was exulting in the hope of singing the new song in heaven.[1] 1742 Age 39

Leaving Birstal, Wesley and John Taylor came to Newcastle on Friday, May 28.

This northern metropolis was then widely different to what it is at present. Then the only streets, of any consequence, were Pilgrim Street, Newgate Street, Westgate Street, the Side, and Sandgate. On the south of Westgate Street there was nothing but open country. Between Westgate Street and Newgate Street, the only buildings were the vicarage and St. John's church; whilst between Newgate Street and the upper part of Pilgrim Street almost the only edifice was the house of the Franciscan Friars. On the east of Pilgrim Street were open fields, and on the north nothing but a few straggling houses. The town was surrounded with a wall, having turrets, towers, and gates. On what is now the centre of the town, stood the princely dwelling of Sir William Blackett, environed with extensive pleasure grounds, adorned with trees and statues. There were five churches: St. John's, in which, besides the Sunday services, there were public prayers three times every week; St. Andrew's, where, in addition to services on sabbaths, prayers were read every Wednesday and Friday morning; Allhallows; St. Nicholas's, in which there was public service twice daily; and the church of St. Thomas, at the entrance of the street on Newcastle bridge. The Roman Catholics had a chapel at the Nuns; the Quakers a meeting-house in Pilgrim Street, nearly opposite to

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1808, p. 138.

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the Pilgrim's Inn; and the Dissenters two or three chapels in different parts, and also a burial ground near Ballast Hills.[1]

As already stated, Wesley reached Newcastle on Friday night, the 28th of May. The public house, in which he lodged, belonged to a Mr. Gun, and stood a few yards northward of the site on which he built his Orphan House. This, at the time, was open country, and about a mile from busy, dirty, degraded Sandgate on the river side. On walking out, after tea, he was surprised and shocked at the abounding wickedness. Drunkenness and swearing seemed general, and even the mouths of little children were full of curses. How he spent the Saturday we are not informed; but, on Sunday morning, at seven,[2] he and John Taylor took their stand, near the pump, in Sandgate, "the poorest and most contemptible part of the town," and began to sing the old hundredth psalm and tune. Three or four people came about them, "to see what was the matter;" these soon increased in number, and, before Wesley finished preaching, his congregation consisted of from twelve to fifteen hundred persons. When the service was ended, the people still "stood gaping, with the most profound astonishment," upon which Wesley said: "If you desire to know who I am, my name is John Wesley. At five in the evening, with God's help, I design to preach here again."

Such was the commencement of Methodism in the north of England,—the preacher the renowned John Wesley, doubtless dressed in full canonicals, with plain John Taylor standing at his side,—the time seven o'clock on a Sunday morning, in the beautiful month of May,—the place Sandgate, crowded with keelmen and sailors, using, says Christopher Hopper, "the language of hell, as though they had received a liberal education in the regions of woe,"[3]—the song of praise the old hundredth psalm, which, like the grand old ocean, is as fresh and as full of music now as it was when it first was written,—and the text, the very pith of gospel truth, "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed."

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[1] Bourne's and Brand's histories of Newcastle. [2] Manuscripts.
[3] *Methodist Magazine*, 1848, p. 91.

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Strict churchman as he was, there can be but little doubt, that Wesley and his companion attended the morning and afternoon services in some of the Newcastle churches; but at five o'clock, amid balmy breezes, he again took his stand on the hill, by the side of the Keelman's Hospital. On one hand was the town with the fine old wall, fortified with towers; on the other hand were fields, stretching away to Ouseburn and Byker; behind him was the open country, dotted here and there with fragrant gardens, Jesus's Hospital, the work-house, the charity school of Allhallows church, and Pandon Hall, formerly the residence of the Northumbrian kings; while just before him were the swarming hordes of Sandgate, the crowded quay, and the river Tyne. The hill was covered from its summit to its base. In Moorfields and on Kennington Common, he had preached to congregations numbering from ten to twenty thousand people; but his congregation here was the largest he had ever seen. "After preaching," he writes, "the poor people were ready to tread me under foot, out of pure love and kindness." With difficulty, he reached his inn, where he found several of his hearers waiting his arrival. They told him they were members of a religious society, which had existed for many years, had a "fine library," and whose "steward read a sermon every Sunday." They urged him to remain with them, at least, a few days longer; but, having promised to be at Birstal on Tuesday night, he was unable to consent. Accordingly, rising even before the sun on Monday morning, he set out at three o'clock, rode about eighty miles, and lodged at night at Boroughbridge. The next day, he came to Birstal, holding a prayer-meeting at Knaresborough on the way; and at night, surrounded by a vast multitude, conducted a religious service of two hours and a half duration. In Birstal and its neighbourhood, he spent the next three days, preaching at Mrs. Holmes's, near Halifax, at Dewsbury Moor, at Mirfield, and at Adwalton.

He then set out for Epworth, and went to an inn, where an old servant of his father's and two or three poor women found him. The next day being Sunday, he offered to assist Mr Romley, the curate, either by preaching or reading prayers; but his offer was declined, and a sermon was offensively

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preached by Romley against enthusiasts. After the service, John Taylor gave notice, as the people were coming out, that Mr. Wesley, not being permitted to preach in the church, designed to preach in the churchyard, at six o'clock. Accordingly, at that hour, he stood on his father's tombstone, and preached to the largest congregation Epworth had ever witnessed. The scene was unique and inspiriting,—a living son preaching on a dead father's grave, because the parish priest refused to allow him to officiate in a dead father's church. "I am well assured," writes Wesley, "that I did far more good to my Lincolnshire parishioners by preaching three days on my father's tomb, than I did by preaching three years in his pulpit."[1]

Contrary to his intention, he remained eight days at Epworth, and every night used his father's tombstone as his rostrum. He also preached at Burnham, Ouston, Belton, Overthorp, and Haxey. Here religious societies had been formed; but two men, John Harrison and Richard Ridley, had poisoned them with the Moravian heresy, telling them that "all the ordinances are man's inventions, and that if they went to church or sacrament, they would be damned." One of them, at Belton, who once ran well, now said "he saw the devil in every corner of the church, and in the face of every one who went to it." Still, a great work had been wrought among them, and some of them had suffered for it. "Their angry neighbours," says Wesley, "had carried a whole wagon-load of these new heretics before a magistrate. But when he asked what they had done, there was a deep silence, for that was a point their conductors had forgotten. At length, one said 'they pretended to be better than other people, and prayed from morning to night;' and another said, 'they have *convarted* my wife. Till she went among them she had such a tongue! and now she is as quiet as a lamb!' 'Take them back, take them back,' replied the justice, 'and let them convert all the scolds in the town.'"

As already intimated, Wesley's preaching on his father's grave was attended with amazing power. On one occasion, the people on every side wept aloud; and on another, several

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 84.

dropped down as dead; Wesley's voice was drowned by the cries of penitents; and many there and then, in the old churchyard, found peace with God, and broke out into loud thanksgiving. A gentleman, who had not been at public worship of any kind for upwards of thirty years, stood motionless as a statue. "Sir," asked Wesley, "are you a sinner?" "Sinner enough!" said he, and still stood staring upwards, till his wife and servant, who were both in tears, put him into his chaise, and took him home. 1742 Age 39

John Whitelamb, Wesley's brother-in-law, clergyman at Wroote, heard him preach at Epworth, and wrote him, saying, "Your presence creates an awe, as if you were an inhabitant of another world. I cannot think as you do; but I retain the highest veneration and affection for you. The sight of you moves me strangely. My heart overflows with gratitude. I cannot refrain from tears, when I reflect, this is the man, who at Oxford was more than a father to me; this is he, whom I have there heard expound, or dispute publicly, or preach at St. Mary's, with such applause. I am quite forgotten. None of the family ever honour me with a line! Have I been ungrateful? I have been passionate, fickle, a fool; but I hope I shall never be ungrateful."[1]

On receiving this, Wesley hastened to visit his old friend; preached, on his way, at Haxey; then again in Whitelamb's church; and again, at night, on his father's tomb, to an immense multitude, the last service lasting for about three hours. He writes, "We scarce knew how to part. Oh, let none think his labour of love is lost because the fruit does not immediately appear! Near forty years did my father labour here; but he saw little fruit of all his labour. I took some pains among this people too; and my strength also seemed spent in vain: but now the fruit appeared. There were scarce any in the town on whom either my father or I had taken any pains formerly, but the seed, sown so long since, now sprung up, bringing forth repentance and remission of sins."

Thus, despite Mr. Romley's railing at the enthusiast, his churchyard became the scene of some of Wesley's greatest triumphs. John Whitelamb, writing to Charles Wesley, says:

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1778, p. 184.

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"I had the honour and happiness of seeing and conversing with my brother John. He behaved to me truly like himself. I found in him, what I have always experienced heretofore, the gentleman, the friend, the brother, and the Christian."[1]

David Taylor has been mentioned. Some say he had been one of the servants of the Earl of Huntingdon. Others say he had been footman to Lady Margaret Hastings; and others, that he had been the butler of Lady Betty. Be that as it may, having been converted, under Ingham's preaching, and being a man of ability and of some education, the Countess of Huntingdon had sent him into the surrounding hamlets and villages to preach; and, by degrees, his labours were extended to various parts of Derbyshire, Cheshire, and Yorkshire. One of his principal places of preaching was Heeley, a village about a mile from Sheffield; and one of his converts was John Bennet, afterwards the husband of Grace Murray. David had fallen into the *German stillness*, and Wesley wished to see him. Hearing he was at Sheffield, Wesley, on leaving Epworth on the 14th of June, went to meet him. In an interview, he found that David "had occasionally exhorted multitudes of people in various parts, and had been made an instrument of good to many, but he had taken no further thought about them," and the permanent results were small.

After preaching for four days in Sheffield and the neighbourhood, Wesley hastened to the Countess of Huntingdon's, and thence, by way of Coventry, Evesham, and Stroud, to Bristol, which he reached on June 28, having spent about six weeks in his important tour to the north of England and back again.

Within a month after this, his venerable mother exchanged earth for heaven. Hearing of her illness, he hastened from Bristol to London to see her. Charles was absent, but her five daughters were with her. Wesley writes: "I found my mother on the borders of eternity; but she had no doubt or fear; nor any desire but to depart and to be with Christ." She died of gout,[2] on Friday, July 23. Early in the morning, on awaking out of sleep, she cried, "My dear Saviour! Art Thou come to help me at my last extremity?" In the after-

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1778, p. 185. [2] Ibid. 1846, p. 362.

noon, as soon as the intercession meeting at the Foundery was ended, Wesley went to her, and found her pulse almost gone, and her fingers dead. Her look was calm, and her eyes were fixed upward. Wesley used the commendatory prayer, and, with his sisters, sang a requiem to her parting soul. She was perfectly sensible, but gasping for life. Within an hour, she died without a struggle, groan, or sigh; and Wesley and his sisters stood round her bed, and fulfilled her last request, uttered a little before she lost her speech: "Children, as soon as I am released, sing a psalm of praise to God." The remains of this sainted lady were interred on Sunday, August 1, in Bunhill-fields. An immense multitude was present; Wesley performed the service; and then preached from Revelation xx. 12, 13. "It was," says he, "one of the most solemn assemblies I ever saw, or expect to see on this side eternity."[1] 1742 Age 39

Wesley spent the next three months in London and in Bristol, and in journeying to and fro; his brother Charles labouring, at the same time, at Newcastle and in the north.

On the 18th of August, he met his brother and Charles Caspar Graves in Bristol. Mr. Graves had been a student of St. Mary Magdalen College, Oxford, and was one of the Oxford Methodists. Two years after the Wesleys left for Georgia, the friends of Graves believed him to be "stark mad," and removed him from his college. He found peace with God in 1738, and became an exceedingly zealous outdoor preacher; but, in 1740, he was persuaded, and almost coerced, to sign a paper to the effect, that he now renounced the principles and practice of the Methodists; that he was heartily sorry he had occasioned scandal by attending their meetings; and that, in future, he should avoid doing so.

For nearly two years, he acted accordingly; but, on meeting the Wesleys in Bristol at the time above mentioned, he wrote to the fellows of St. Mary Magdalen College, revoking the document he had been led to sign, and declaring that he now looked upon himself "to be under no kind of obligation to observe anything contained in that scandalous paper, so unchristianly imposed upon him."

[1] Jackson's Life of C. Wesley, vol. i., p. 319.

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Immediately after this, Charles Wesley and Mr. Graves set off for the north of England. Having spent a few days with John Nelson and his Methodist friends at Birstal, they proceeded to Newcastle. Mr. Graves returned to Birstal in about a fortnight; but Charles Wesley continued among the colliers of the Tyne, formed the Newcastle society, and did not return to London until his brother was ready to take his place in the month of November following.[1]

On his arrival, November 13, Wesley met, what he calls, "the wild, staring, loving society;" he took them with him to the sacrament at Allhallows church; he reproved some among them who walked disorderly; and ascertained that few were thoroughly convinced of sin, and scarcely any could witness that their sins were pardoned. Great power, however, began to attend his preaching. On one occasion, six or seven dropped down as dead; and, at another time, several of the genteel people were constrained to roar aloud for the disquietness of their hearts.

He extended his labours to the surrounding villages. At Whickham he "spoke strong, rough words;" but none of the people seemed to regard his sayings. At Tanfield Leigh, he preached "to a dead, senseless, unaffected congregation." At Horsley, notwithstanding a bitter frost, he preached in the open air, the wind driving upon the congregation, and scattering straw and thatch among them in all directions.

In Newcastle, though the season was winter, he preached out of doors as often as he could; and, at other times, in a room, in a narrow lane, now Lisle Street, nearly opposite the site of Wesley's Orphan House. This "room," or "tabernacle" (as it was also called) had been built "by a fanatic of the name of Macdonald," who had now removed to Manchester.[2] It was the first Methodist meeting-house in the north of England.

The work accomplished was marvellous. It was only eight months since Wesley entered Newcastle as a perfect stranger; and, yet, there were now above eight hundred persons joined

[1] John Nelson's Journal.

[2] Brand's History of Newcastle, vol. ii., p. 424; and *Wesleyan Times*, 1856, p. 597.

together in his society, besides many others in the surrounding towns and villages who had been benefited by his ministry. He writes: "I never saw a work of God, in any other place, so evenly and gradually carried on. It continually rose step by step. Not so much seemed to be done at any one time, as had frequently been done at Bristol or London; but something at every time."[1] 1742 Age 39

Among these northern converts, there were not a few, who subsequently rendered important service to the cause of Christ; brave spirits who deserve a niche in Methodistic history, but whom, for the present, we are reluctantly obliged to pass in silence.

Such a society being formed, a place for meeting became imperative. Several sites were offered; one outside the gate of Pilgrim Street was bought; and, on December 20, the foundation stone was laid; after which Wesley preached, but, three or four times during the sermon, was obliged to stop, that the people might engage in prayer and give thanks to God. The building was calculated to cost £700; Wesley had just twenty-six shillings towards this expenditure;[2] many thought it would never be completed; but Wesley writes: "I was of another mind; nothing doubting but, as it was begun for God's sake, He would provide what was needful for the finishing it."

This "clumsy, ponderous pile," as John Hampson calls it, was then the largest Methodist meeting-house in England "Clumsy and ponderous" we grant it was, but still a "pile" hallowed by associations far too sacred to be easily forgotten. Here one of the first Sunday-schools in the kingdom was established, and had not fewer than a thousand children in attendance. Here a Bible society existed before the British and Foreign Bible Society was formed. Here was one of the best choirs in England; and here, among the singers, were the sons of Mr. Scott, afterwards the celebrated Lords Eldon and Stowell.[3] Here was the resting place of John Wesley's first itinerants; and here colliers and keelmen, from all parts of the

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 294.
[2] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 551.
[3] *Christian Miscellany*, 1858, pp. 97, 164.

1742 Age 39 surrounding country, would assemble, and, after the evening service, would throw themselves upon the benches, and sleep the few remaining hours till Wesley preached at five next morning.[1] The "clumsy, ponderous" old Orphan House was the head quarters of Methodism in the north of England.

Within the last four years Wesley had built "the room" at Bristol, and the school at Kingswood; and he had bought, and repaired, and almost rebuilt "that vast, uncouth heap of ruins," called "the Foundery." He began in Bristol without funds, but money had been furnished as he needed it; and now, with £1 6*s*., he begun to erect a building to cost £700. Three months after laying the foundation stone, in the inclement month of March, while the building was yet without roof, doors, or windows, Wesley opened it by preaching from the narrative of the rich man and Lazarus; and, afterwards, amid bricks, mortar, and a builder's usual *débris*, held a watchnight, the light of a full moon probably being the only illumination the damp, cold, unfinished building had, and equinoctial gales and winter winds wafting the watchnight hymns of these happy Methodists to a higher and holier world than this. Truly the cradle in which Methodism was rocked by the hand of Providence was often rough.

Having begun the building, it was high time for Wesley to begin to find means to pay for it. Accordingly, he arranged to leave his Newcastle friends on the last day of 1742. He preached his farewell sermon—a sermon of two hours' continuance—in the open air; men, women, and children hung upon him, and were unwilling to part with him; and, even after he had mounted his horse and started on his journey, "a muckle woman" kept her hold of him, and ran by his horse's side, through thick and thin, till the town was fairly left behind him.

We thus find Methodism firmly rooted in Bristol, Kingswood, London, and Newcastle; and, besides this, Wesley writes: "In this year many other societies were formed in Somersetshire, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, Leicestershire, Warwickshire, and Nottinghamshire, as well as the southern parts of Yorkshire."[2]

[1] Manuscripts.

[2] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 295.

Not only were churches on earth multiplied, but additions were made to the church in heaven. Mr. Dolman, who rarely failed to be at the Foundery by five o'clock, died full of love, and peace, and joy in believing. James Angel gave up his spirit to God in the full triumph of faith. Mary Whittle cried out: "It is done, it is done! Christ lives in me;" and died in a moment. Another female member of the London society expired with the words, "I fear not death; it hath no sting for me. I shall live for evermore." Sarah Whiskin cried out, "My Lord and my God!" fetched a double sigh, and died. John Woolley, a child of thirteen years, threw his arms wide open, and said, "Come, come, Lord Jesus! I am Thine;" and soon after breathed his last. And Lucy Godshall died basking in the light of her Saviour's countenance. All these belonged to the London society. 1742 Age 39

The purest gold is sometimes mixed with dross; and so it was with Methodism. Some of the Foundery society fanatically talked of feeling the blood of Christ running upon their arms, their breasts, their hearts, and down their throats. Wesley met them, and denounced their folly as the empty dreams of heated imaginations. Good John Brown, of Tanfield Leigh, two or three days after his conversion, came riding through Newcastle, hallooing and shouting, and driving all the people before him; telling them that God had revealed to him that he should be a king, and should tread all his enemies beneath his feet. Wesley arrested him, and sent him home immediately, advising him to cry day and night to God, lest the devil should gain an advantage over him. These were rare exceptions, and were promptly checked.

Two, who called themselves *prophets*, came to Wesley in London, stating, that they were sent from God to say, he would shortly be *born'd* again; and that, unless he turned them out, they would stay in the house till it was done. He gravely answered, that he would not turn them out, and took them down into the room of the society. Here he left them. "It was tolerably cold," says he, "and they had neither meat nor drink. However, there they sat from morning to evening, when they quietly went away, and I have heard nothing from them since."

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In 1742, persecution by means of the public press had, to some extent, abated;[1] but mobs and vulgar-minded men were as violent as ever. At Long Lane, in London, they threw large stones upon the house in which Wesley was preaching, which, with the tiles, fell among the people, endangering their lives. At Chelsea, burning substances were cast into the room till it was filled with smoke. At Pensford, near Bristol, a hired rabble brought a bull, which they had been baiting, and tried to drive it among the people; and then, forcing their way to the little table on which Wesley stood, they "tore it bit from bit," with fiendish vengeance. A similar outrage was perpetrated in the neighbourhood of Whitechapel. The mob did their utmost to force a herd of cattle among the congregation; and then threw showers of stones, one of which struck Wesley between the eyes; but, wiping away the blood, he continued the service as if nought had happened. At Cardiff, while Charles Wesley was preaching, women were kicked, and their clothes set on fire by rockets, thrown into the room among them; the desk in which the preacher stood was dashed to pieces, and the Bible wrested from his hands, one of the brutal persecutors solemnly declaring that, if he went straight to hell for doing it, he would persecute the Methodists to his dying day.[2]

In the midst of such violence, Wesley calmly pursued the path of duty, praying, preaching, visiting the sick and dying, forming societies, building chapels, reading, writing, and publishing.

During the year, he read Dr. Pitcairn's works,—"dry, sour, and controversial;" Jacob Behmen's Exposition of Genesis, the "most sublime nonsense, inimitable bombast, fustian not to be paralleled, all of a piece with his inspired interpretation of the word *tetragrammaton;* Madame Guyon's "Short Method of Prayer," and "Les Torrents Spirituelles," from which "poor quietist" the Moravians had taken many of their unscriptural

[1] Early in the year 1742, an eightpenny pamphlet was published, which Wesley never noticed. Its title was, "A Letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, in vindication of the Doctrines of absolute, unconditional Election, particular Redemption, special Vocation, and final Perseverance. Occasioned chiefly by some things in his Dialogue between a Presbyterian and his Friend; and in his Hymns on God's Everlasting Love."

[2] *Weekly History*, No. 78: Oct. 2, 1742.

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expressions; "The Life of Ignatius Loyola," "a surprising book," concerning "one of the greatest men that ever engaged in supporting so bad a cause;" and "The Life of Gregory Lopez," "a good and wise, though much mistaken man."

Wesley's publications, during 1742, were the following:—

1. "A Companion for the Altar. Extracted from Thomas à Kempis." 12mo, 24 pages.

2. "An Extract of the Rev. Mr. John Wesley's Journal, from August 12, 1738, to November 1, 1739." 12mo, 98 pages.

3. "A Treatise on Christian Prudence. Extracted from Mr. Norris."[1] 12mo, 35 pages.

4. "A Collection of Hymns, translated from the German;" 36 pages. These were twenty-four in number, and had previously been published in his "Hymns and Sacred Poems."

5. "A Narrative of the Work of God, at and near Northampton in New England. Extracted from Mr. Edwards's Letter to Dr. Coleman." 12mo, 48 pages.

6. "A Collection of Tunes set to Music, as they are commonly sung at the Foundery." Duodecimo, of thirty-six pages, containing forty-three tunes for one voice only, some set in the treble and some in the tenor clef.[2]

Great revivals of religion have generally been attended by copious productions of hymns of praise; and thus it was at the rise of Methodism. This was emphatically the great era of hymn writing in the English church. Watts, Doddridge, and Erskine poured forth the joys of their converted hearts, and furnished lyric lines, which have been used, in sacred worship, by millions. But of all the hymnists then living, the Wesleys were the most remarkable. A competent authority has estimated that, during Wesley's lifetime there were published not fewer than six thousand six hundred hymns from the pen of Charles Wesley only.[3] Having furnished their societies with so many hymns, no wonder

[1] Since the above was written, we have met with one of Wesley's letters, in Rawlinson's Continuation of Wood's "Athenæ Oxoniensis," in which he states that he published, "An Abridgment of Mr. Norris's Christian Prudence, and Reflections on the Conduct of our Understanding," in 1734.

[2] *Methodist Magazine*, 1866, p. 324. [3] Ibid.

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that the Wesleys collected and furnished tunes. Their religion made them happy; and happiness always finds vent in song. The old Methodists were remarkable for their singing. Why? Because their hearts throbbed with the "joy unspeakable and full of glory." Make a man happy, and he is sure to sing. Thus it was with Wesley and the thousands who looked to him as their great leader. Naturally, the Wesleys were full of poetry; and religion, so far from extinguishing the fire, fanned it into a holy flame. Their taste in music may be gathered from Wesley's directions to his preachers. "Suit the tune to the words. Avoid complex tunes, which it is scarcely possible to sing with devotion. Repeating the same words so often, especially while another repeats different words, shocks all common sense, necessarily brings in dead formality, and has no more religion in it than a Lancashire hornpipe. Sing no anthems. Do not suffer the people to sing too slow. In every society, let them learn to sing; and let them always learn our own tunes first. Let the women constantly sing their parts alone. Let no man sing with them, unless he understands the notes, and sings the bass, as it is pricked down in the book. Introduce no new tunes till they are perfect in the old. Let no organ be placed anywhere, till proposed in the Conference. Recommend our tune-book everywhere; and if you cannot sing yourself, choose a person or two in each place to pitch the tune for you. Exhort every one in the congregation to sing, not one in ten only."[1]

Well would it be if Methodist ministers were to enforce such rules as these, instead of leaving the most beautiful part of public worship, as is too often done, to the irreligious whims and criminal caprice of organists and choirs. No one can doubt the fact that, within the last forty years, the singing in Methodist chapels has deteriorated to an extent which ought to be alarming. The tunes now too generally sung are intolerably insipid; and, as to any sympathy between them and the inspiriting hymns of Charles Wesley, it would be preposterous to say that a particle of such sympathy exists. Such singing may suit the *classic* taste of fashionable

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. viii., p. 306.

congregations assembled amid the chilling influence of gothic decorations; but it bears no resemblance whatever to the general outbursts of heartfelt praise, adoration, and thanksgiving, which characterised the old Methodists. It is high time for Methodist preachers to keep John Wesley's rules respecting singing; to substitute John Wesley's tunes and others like them for the soulless sounds now called classic music; and to feel that, before God and man, they are as much responsible for the singing in sanctuaries as they are for that part of public worship which consists of prayer. 1742 Age 39

7. Wesley's last publication, in 1742, was "The Principles of a Methodist," 12mo, 32 pages. This was written in reply to a pamphlet of the Rev. Josiah Tucker, who had tried to show that the Methodists, in the first instance, had been the disciples of William Law the mystic, and then of the Moravians; and, that now their principles were a perfect "medley of Calvinism, Arminianism, Quakerism, Quietism, and Montanism, all thrown together."[1]

In reply to the charge of believing inconsistencies, Wesley remarks:—1. That Mr. Law's system of truth had never been the creed of the Methodists. He himself was eight years at Oxford before he read any of Mr. Law's writings; and when he did read them, so far from making them his creed, he had objections to almost every page. 2. That the Germans, with whom he travelled to Georgia, infused into him no ideas about justification, or anything else; for he came back with the same notions he had when he went; but Peter Bohler's affirmation that true faith in Christ is always attended with "dominion over sin, and constant peace from a sense of forgiveness," and that "justification was an instantaneous work,"—led him to make anxious inquiry, which resulted in his conviction, that Bohler's doctrine was true, and that, notwithstanding all his past good performances, he himself was still without true faith in Christ. 3. He repudiates the inconsistent creed which Mr. Tucker puts into his mouth, and concludes as follows:—"I may say many things which have

[1] Mr. Tucker was vicar of All Saints, Bristol. This pamphlet (octavo, fifty-one pages) was written at the request of the Archbishop of Armagh, and was entitled, "A Brief History of the Principles of Methodism."

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been said before, and perhaps by Calvin or Arminius, by Montanus or Barclay, or the Archbishop of Cambray; but it cannot thence be inferred that I hold a 'medley of all their principles,—Calvinism, Arminianism, Montanism, Quakerism, Quietism, all thrown together.' There might as well have been added Judaism, Mahommedanism, Paganism. It would have made the period rounder, and been full as easily proved, I mean asserted; for no other proof is yet produced."

This was Wesley's first battle. In his "address to the reader," he remarks:—

"I have often wrote on controverted points before; but not with an eye to any particular person. So that this is the first time I have appeared in controversy, properly so called. Indeed I have not wanted occasion to do it before; particularly when, after many stabs in the dark, I was publicly attacked, not by an open enemy, but by my own familiar friend." [Whitefield.] "But I could not answer him. I could only cover my face and say, Και συ εις εκεινων; και συ, τεκνον; 'Art thou also among them? art thou, my son?'

"I now tread an untried path, 'with fear and trembling'; fear, not of my adversary, but of myself. I fear my own spirit, lest I 'fall where many mightier have been slain.' Every disputant seems to think (as every soldier) that he may hit his opponent as much as he can; nay, that he ought to do his worst to him, or he cannot make the best of his own cause."

Wesley then denounces this mode of conducting controversy, and declares that he wishes to treat Mr. Tucker and all opponents as he would treat his own brother. In such a spirit, Wesley began his long continued, perhaps unparalleled, controversial life.[1]

[1] Wesley also published "Hymns and Poems" in 1742; but as his poetical publications were chiefly written by his brother, they will be only occasionally noticed hereafter. For full information the reader is referred to the "Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley," in twelve volumes, octavo, published at the Wesleyan-Methodist Conference Office, City Road, London.

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DURING the year 1743, Wesley spent about fourteen weeks in London, ten in Bristol and its vicinity, thirteen in Newcastle and the neighbourhood, three in Cornwall, and twelve in travelling chiefly to the north of England. He was now a thorough itinerant; and itinerating in England then was widely different from what it is at present. Turnpike roads did not exist; and no stage coach went farther north than the town of York.[1] Wesley travelled on horseback, reading as he rode, and usually having one of his preachers with him. In a life like this, there was much of both hardship and incident. For instance, on New Year's day, between Doncaster and Epworth, he met a man so drunk that he could hardly keep his seat, but who, on discovering that Wesley was his fellow traveller, cried out, "I am a Christian! I am a Churchman! I am none of your Culamites!" And then, as if afraid that Wesley might turn out to be the devil, away he went, as fast as his horse could carry him. Twelve days after, on reaching Stratford upon Avon, Wesley was requested to visit a woman of middle age, who, with a distorted face, and a lolling tongue, had bellowed so horribly, in the presence of the parish minister, that he pronounced her possessed with demons. Wesley went, but, staring at her visitor, she said nothing ailed her. After singing a verse or two, Wesley and his friends began to pray. Just as he commenced, he felt as if he "had been plunged into cold water," and immediately there was a tremendous roar. The woman was reared up in bed, her whole body moving, without bending either joint or limb. Then it writhed into all kinds of postures, the poor wretch still bellowing. Wesley, however, continued praying, until all demoniacal symptoms ceased, and the woman began rejoicing and praising God. On another occasion, in the month of April, while baiting his horse at

[1] Southey's Life of Wesley.

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One of the first events in this memorable year was the organisation of the Calvinistic Methodists in Wales. At a meeting held at Watford (near Cardiff), on January 5 and 6, and at which there were present four clergymen—Whitefield, Rowlands, Powell, and Williams, and three laymen—Howel Harris, Joseph Humphreys, and John Cennick, it was agreed that "public exhorters" should be employed, and that each "public exhorter," with the assistance of "private exhorters," should take the oversight of twelve or fourteen societies. Each "private exhorter" was to inspect only one or two societies, and was to follow his ordinary calling. Howel Harris was to be a general travelling superintendent; and the clergymen were to itinerate as much as they were able. Each society was to have a box, under the care of stewards,

to receive weekly contributions towards the support of the general work; and the clergymen and exhorters were to meet in conference once, or oftener, every year.[1] Thus Whitefield, Harris, Humphreys, and Cennick began to *organise* their societies before the Wesleys did. 1743 Age 40

After an absence of seven weeks, Wesley returned to Newcastle, on the 19th of February, and at once set to work to purge the society of unworthy members. Since he left, on December 30, seventy-six had forsaken the society; and sixty-four were now expelled, about eight hundred still remaining. Of those who had voluntarily withdrawn themselves, a large proportion were Dissenters, who left, because otherwise their ministers refused to them the sacrament; thirty-three because their husbands, wives, parents, masters, or acquaintance objected; five because such bad things were said of the society; nine because they would not be laughed at; one because she was afraid of falling into fits; and fourteen for sundry other reasons. Among those expelled, there were two for swearing; two for sabbath breaking; seventeen for drunkenness; two for retailing spirituous liquors; three for quarreling; one for beating his wife; three for wilful lying; four for railing; one for laziness; and twenty-nine for lightness and carelessness. Thus, within a few months after its formation, the Newcastle society was purged of one hundred and forty of its members.

Joined with Newcastle were a number of country places, at each of which Wesley preached every week, excepting Swalwell, where he went only once a fortnight. These were Horsley, Pelton, Chowden, South Biddick, Tanfield, Birtley, and Placey. At Chowden, he found he had got into the very Kingswood of the north; twenty or thirty wild children, in rags and almost nakedness, flocking round about him. At Pelton, in the midst of the sermon, one of the colliers began to shout amain from an excess of joy; but their usual token of approbation was clapping Wesley on the back. At Placey, the colliers had always been in the first rank for savage ignorance and all kinds of wickedness. Every Sunday men, women, and children met together to dance, fight, curse and

[1] Life and Times of Howel Harris, p. 96, etc.

1743 swear, and play at chuck ball, span farthing, or whatever came
Age 40. to hand; but, notwithstanding this, when Wesley went among them, on the 1st of April, and preached amid wind, sleet, and snow till he was encased in ice, "they gave earnest heed to the things which were spoken."

In Newcastle, almost every night, there were scenes of great excitement. Numbers dropped down, lost their strength, and were seized with agonies. Some said, they felt as if a sword was running through them; others thought a great weight upon them; others could hardly breathe; and others felt as if their bodies were being torn to pieces. "These symptoms," says Wesley, "I can no more impute to any natural causes, than to the Spirit of God. I can make no doubt, but it was Satan tearing them, as they were coming to Christ. And hence proceeded those grievous cries, whereby he might design both to discredit the work of God, and to affright fearful people from hearing that word whereby their souls might be saved."

Wesley left on April 7, and on the 30th of May was succeeded by his brother. Charles put an end to these annoying fits, and says, "I am more and more convinced it was a device of Satan to stop the course of the gospel." He preached to "a thousand wild people" at Sunderland. At South Shields, his congregation consisted of "a huge multitude; many of them very fierce and threatening"; while the churchwardens and others tried to interrupt him by throwing dirt, and even money among the people. The mob at North Shields, led on by the parish priest, roughly saluted him; his reverence commanding a man to blow a horn, and his companions to shout.

Charles left on the 21st of June, and, eight days afterwards, was succeeded by John. The society was further reduced, by fresh backslidings, to about six hundred members. Wesley spent nearly three weeks among them; formed a society out of "his favourite congregation at Placey;" and then returned to London.

He came again on October 31st, and found the following advertisement was published:—

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"FOR THE BENEFIT OF MR. ESTE.

By the Edinburgh Company of Comedians, on Friday, November 4, will be acted a Comedy, called

THE CONSCIOUS LOVERS;

To which will be added, a Farce, called,

TRICK UPON TRICK, OR METHODISM DISPLAYED."

The day came; and about fifteen hundred people assembled in Moot Hall to see the funny farce, some hundreds having to sit upon the stage. Soon after the comedians began the first act of "The Conscious Lovers," the seats upon the stage broke down, and their occupants were left sprawling in all directions. In the midst of the second act, all the shilling seats gave a crack, and began to sink. The people shrieked, and numbers ran away. When the third act was commencing, the entire stage suddenly sunk about six inches, and the players precipitately fled. At the end of the act, all the sixpenny seats, in a moment, fell with an alarming crash, which caused cries on every side. Most of the people had now left the hall, but, two or three hundred still remaining, Este, who was to act the Methodist, came forward and told them he was determined that the farce should be performed. While he was speaking, the stage sunk six inches more; when the valorous comedian and the remnant of his audience took to their heels in the utmost confusion. The week after, however, the farce was acted, and hundreds of people went again to see it.

One or two incidents in connection with Wesley's northern journeys may be noticed here.

While returning to the south, at the beginning of the year, he was, for the first time in his life, repelled from the sacramental table. This occurred at Epworth. Having preached, on his father's tomb, to a large congregation, gathered from the neighbouring towns, and it being the sacramental Sunday, some of the people went to Romley, the curate, to ask his permission to communicate; to whom the proud priest replied, "Tell Mr. Wesley, I shall not give *him* the sacrament; for he is not *fit*." Wesley writes, "How wise a God is our God! there could not have been so fit a place under heaven, where

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this should befal me first, as my father's house, the place of my nativity, and the very place where, 'according to the straitest sect of our religion,' I had so long 'lived a Pharisee.' It was also fit, in the highest degree, that he who repelled me from that very table where I had myself so often distributed the bread of life, should be one who owed his all in this world to the tender love which my father had shown to his, as well as personally to himself."

While on his third journey to Newcastle, in 1743, Wesley paid his first visit to the town of Grimsby. Here a woman—a magdalen, who was parted from her husband—offered him a convenient place for preaching, and, under his sermon, became a penitent. Wesley, after hearing her domestic history, told her she must return instantly to her forsaken spouse. She replied, her husband was at Newcastle, and she knew not how to reach him. Wesley said, "I am going to Newcastle to-morrow morning. William Blow is going with me; and you shall ride behind him." This was an odd arrangement, and perhaps not too prudent; but it was carried out. The poor creature rode to Newcastle, sad and sombre; there she met her husband; and, a short time after, was drowned at sea, while on her way to Hull.

Riots

The year 1743 will always be memorable for the riots in Staffordshire. At this period, West Bromwich was an open common, covered with heath, and burrowed with rabbit warrens. Wednesbury was a small country town, irregularly built, the roads following ancient footways, and leaving wide spaces unoccupied. One of these was called the "High Bullen," and was the place where bulls were baited. So extensively did this barbarous sport prevail in the "black country," that, in Tipton parish, nineteen of these furious animals were baited at one of the annual wakes. Wednesbury, however, was most celebrated for its cockfights. Indeed, the Wednesbury "cockings," as Charles Knight informs us, were almost as famous as the races of the "Derby day" at the present time. Recreations are an index to character, and sports, such as these, reflected, as well as moulded, the moral condition of the people.

Charles Wesley, accompanied by Mr. Graves, was the first Methodist who preached at Wednesbury. This was in No-

vember, 1742.[1] His brother followed in January, 1743, and spent four days among the people, preached eight sermons, and formed a society of about one hundred members.[2] Mr. Egginton, the vicar, was extremely courteous, told Wesley he had done much good already, and he doubted not would do much more, invited him to his house, and said the oftener he came the better.[3] 1743 Age 40

Wesley was followed by Mr. Williams, a Welshman, who, it is alleged, vilified the clergy, and called them dumb dogs that could not bark. After him came a bricklayer; then a plumber and glazier, both sent from London; and, under their preaching, people fell down in fits, and made strange hideous noises. Malice, spleen, and feuds sprung up. The Methodists spoke ill natured things of their lawful minister, and told the members of the Church of England, that they would all be damned. These things, it is said, exasperated ignorant people, and were the principal cause of the subsequent disturbances.[4] Wesley paid a second visit to Wednesbury on the 15th of April, and says, "the inexcusable folly of Mr. Williams had so provoked Mr. Egginton, that his former love was turned into bitter hatred." Wesley went to church, where Egginton delivered, with great bitterness of voice and manner, what Wesley pronounced, the most wicked sermon he ever heard; and, two days afterwards, while he himself was preaching, a neighbouring parson, who was extremely drunk, after using many unseemly and bitter words, tried to ride over his congregation.

Charles Wesley came on the 20th of May, and found the society increased to above three hundred. "The enemy," he writes, "rages exceedingly, and preaches against them. A few have returned railing for railing; but the generality have behaved as the followers of Christ." A Dissenter had given a piece of ground upon which to build a chapel, and Charles says, "I consecrated it by a hymn." He went to Walsal, accompanied by many of the brethren, singing songs of

[1] "Papers on the Rise and Progress of Methodism at Wednesbury." London: 1744.
[2] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 295. [3] Ibid. vol. xii., p. 75.
[4] Papers on Rise, etc., of Methodism at Wednesbury, 1744.

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praise. He preached from the steps of the market house, the mob roaring, shouting, and throwing stones incessantly. Many struck him, but none hurt him.

Soon after this, while a small party of Wednesbury Methodists were returning from Darlaston, singing hymns, the Darlaston mob began to pelt them with stones and dirt; while the united mobs of Darlaston, Walsal, and Bilston smashed the windows of most of the Methodist houses in Wednesbury, Darlaston, and West Bromwich.[1] In some instances, money was extorted, and in others furniture was broken, spoiled, or stolen; and even pregnant women were beaten with clubs and otherwise abused.[2] John Adams, John Eaton, and Francis Ward went to Walsal for a warrant to apprehend the rioters. The magistrate, Mr. Persehouse, told them they had themselves to blame for the outrage that had been committed, and refused their application.[3] The mob hurled against them all sorts of missiles, and when the magistrate was asked to quiet these disturbers of the public peace, he swung his hat round his head, and cried, "Huzza!" Mr. Taylor, the curate of Walsal, came, not to stop the outrage, but to encourage the rioters in their violence. One of them struck Francis Ward on the eye, and cut it so, that he expected to lose his sight. He went into a shop and had it dressed, when the ruffians again pursued him, and beat him most unmercifully. He escaped into the public house, and was again fetched out, and dragged along the street, and through the public kennels, till he lost his strength, and was hardly able to stand erect.

Wesley writes, June 18th: "I received a full account of the terrible riots which had been in Staffordshire. I was not surprised at all; neither should I have wondered if, after the advices they had so often received from the pulpit, as well as from the episcopal chair, the zealous high churchmen had rose and cut all that were Methodists in pieces."

He immediately set out to assist the poor Methodists, as far as he was able, and came to Francis Ward's on the 22nd.

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[1] Papers on Rise, etc., of Methodism at Wednesbury, 1744.
[2] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 164.
[3] Papers on Rise, etc., of Methodism at Wednesbury, 1744.

After hearing the statements of the people, he "thought it best to inquire whether there could be any help from the laws of the land"; and rode to Counsellor Littleton at Tamworth, to ask his opinion on the matter. 1743 Age 40

The mob were still as violent as ever. On the very day before Wesley's arrival at Francis Ward's, a large crowd came to the house of John Eaton, who was a constable. John went to the door, with his constable's staff, and began to read the act of parliament against riots; but stones flew so thick about his head, that he was obliged to leave off reading and to retire. They then broke all his windows, destroyed the door of his dwelling, and smashed his clock to pieces. On the same day, two or three of the Methodists were singing a hymn in John Adams' house, when a pack of apprentices came and threw stones through the windows. A mob destroyed Jonas Turner's windows with a club, threw three baskets full of stones to break his furniture, and ruthlessly dragged him along the ground a distance of sixty yards. They went to Mary Turner's house, at West Bromwich, and hunted her and her two daughters with stones and stakes, threatening to knock them on the head, and to bury them in a ditch. They came to John Bird's house, felled his daughter, snatched money from his wife, and then broke ten of his windows, besides destroying sash frames, shutters, chests of drawers, doors, and dressers. They took Humphrey Hands by the throat, swore they would be the death of him, gave him a great swing, and hurled him on the ground. On rising, they struck him on the eye, and again knocked him down. They then smashed all his windows, shivered many of his household goods, and broke all the shelves, drawers, pots, and bottles in his shop, and destroyed almost all his medicines. All this happened within a day or two of Wesley's coming to Francis Ward's. Indeed, at this very time, there were in and about Wednesbury more than eighty houses, all of which had their windows damaged, and in many of which not three panes of glass were left unbroken.[1]

Counsellor Littleton assured Wesley they might have an easy remedy, if they resolutely prosecuted, as the law directed;

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 162, etc.

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and doubtless this encouraged John Griffiths and Francis Ward to apply, at the end of June, to another magistrate for protection and redress; but, having stated their case to his worship, he talked to them roughly, made game of them, refused a warrant, and said, "I suppose you follow these parsons that come about. I will neither meddle nor make."

For some time, preaching was suspended; and then came Messrs. Graves and Williams, who, however, confined their preaching to private houses.[1] At length, on October 20, Wesley himself again entered this wild beasts' den. At noon, he preached in the centre of the town, and was not disturbed; but, two or three hours afterwards, while he was writing at Francis Ward's, the mob beset the house, and cried, "Bring out the minister; we will have the minister!" At Wesley's request, three of the most furious came into the house, and, after the interchange of a few sentences, were perfectly appeased. With these men to clear the way, Wesley went out, and, standing in the midst of the surging mob, asked them what they wanted with him. Some said, "We want you to go with us to the justice." Wesley replied, "That I will, with all my heart"; and away they went. Before they had walked a mile, the night came on, accompanied with heavy rain. Bentley Hall, the residence of Mr. Lane, the magistrate, was two miles distant. Some pushed forward, and told Mr. Lane, that they were bringing Wesley before his worship. "What have I to do with Wesley?" quoth the magistrate; "take him back again." Presently the crowd came up, and began knocking for admittance. A servant told them his master was in bed. The magistrate declined to see them, but his son asked their business. A spokesman answered, "To be plain, sir, if I must speak the truth, all the fault I find with him is, that he preaches better than our parsons." Another said, "Sir, it is a downright shame; he makes people rise at five in the morning to sing psalms.[2] What advice would your worship give us?" "Go home," said Lane, the younger, "and be quiet."

Finding it impossible to obtain an audience of Mr. Lane,

[1] Papers on Rise, etc., of Methodism at Wednesbury, 1744.
[2] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. i., p. 339.

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they then hurried Wesley to Walsal, to Mr. justice Persehouse. It was now about seven o'clock, and, of course, was dark. Persehouse, however, also refused to see them, on the ground that, like magisterial Mr. Lane, he was gone to bed; and hence there was nothing for it but to trudge back again. About fifty of the crowd undertook to be Wesley's convoy; but, before they had gone more than a hundred yards, the mob of Walsal ran after them; some were pelted; others fled; and Wesley was left, alone and unbefriended, in the hands of the victorious ruffians. Some tried to seize him by the collar, and to pull him down. A big lusty fellow, just behind him, struck him several times with an oaken club. Another rushed through the crowd, lifted his arm to strike, but, on a sudden, let it drop, and only stroked Wesley's head, saying "What soft hair he has!" One man struck him on the breast; and another on the mouth, with such force, that the blood gushed out. He was dragged back to Walsal; and, attempting to enter a large house, the door of which was standing open, he was seized by the hair of the head, and hindered. He was then paraded through the main street, from one end of Walsal to the other. Here he stood, and asked, "Are you willing to hear me speak?" Many cried, "No, no! knock out his brains; down with him; kill him at once!" Wesley asked, "What evil have I done? which of you all have I wronged in word or deed?" Again they cried, "Bring him away, bring him away!" Wesley began to pray; and now a man, who just before headed the mob, turned and said, "Sir, I will spend my life for you; follow me, and no one shall hurt a hair of your head." Two or three of his companions joined him; the mob parted; and these three or four brave ruffians, the captains of the rabble on all occasions, and one of them a prizefighter in a bear garden, took Wesley and carried him safely through the infuriated crowd. He writes: "a little before ten o'clock, God brought me safe to Wednesbury; having lost only one flap of my waistcoat, and a little skin from one of my hands. From the beginning to the end I found the same presence of mind, as if I had been sitting in my own study. But I took no thought for one moment before another; only once it came into my mind, that, if they should throw me into the river, it would spoil the papers that

1743 Age 40 were in my pocket. For myself, I did not doubt but I should swim across, having but a thin coat and a light pair of boots."

It is right to add, that, in the midst of all these perils, there were four brave Methodists who clung to Wesley, resolved to live or die with him, namely, William Sitch, Edward Slater, John Griffiths, and Joan Parks. When Wesley asked William Sitch, what he expected when the mob seized them, William answered with a martyr's spirit, "To die for Him, who died for us." And when Joan Parks was asked if she was not afraid, she said: "No, no more than I am now. I could trust God for you, as well as for myself."

Such was the beginning of Methodism in the "black country." "The heathen raged, and the people imagined a vain thing. But He that sitteth in the heavens laughed; the Lord had them in derision." Human justice there was none; but Divine protection was sufficient. Wesley was carried to the houses of Lane and Persehouse, but these two magisterial worthies refused to see him; and yet, only eight days before, they had the effrontery to issue the following proclamation, which Wesley justly calls one of the greatest curiosities, of the kind, that England had ever seen:—

"*To all High Constables, Petty Constables, and other of His Majesty's Peace Officers, within the county of Staffordshire, and particularly to the Constable of Tipton:*—

"Whereas, we, His Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the said county of Stafford, have received information, that several disorderly persons, styling themselves Methodist preachers, go about raising routs and riots, to the great damage of His Majesty's liege people, and against the peace of our Sovereign Lord the King.

"These are in His Majesty's name, to command you, and every one of you, within your respective districts, to make diligent search after the said Methodist preachers, and to bring him or them before some of us His said Majesty's Justices of the Peace, to be examined concerning their unlawful doings.

"Given under our hands and seals, this 12th day of October, 1743.

"J. LANE,
"W. PERSEHOUSE."[1]

It is a remarkable fact, however, that, notwithstanding Wesley's rough usage, and the pretentiously loyal proclamation of these two unjust justices, Charles Wesley boldly

[1] See *Methodist Recorder*, Oct. 5, 1866.

bearded the lions in their den only five days after his brother so miraculously escaped. He found the poor Methodists "standing fast in one mind and spirit, in nothing terrified by their adversaries." He writes: "Never before was I in so primitive an assembly. We sung praises lustily, and with a good courage; and could all set our seal to the truth of our Lord's saying, 'Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake.' We assembled before day to sing hymns of praise to Christ; and, as soon as it was light, I walked down the town, and preached boldly on Revelation ii. 10. It was a most glorious time. Our souls were satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and we longed for our Lord's coming to confess us before His Father and His holy angels." [1] 1743 Age 40

Even this is not all. The clergyman at Darlaston was so struck with the meek behaviour of the Methodists, in the midst of suffering, that he offered to join the Wesleys in punishing the rioters; [2] while "honest Munchin," as he was called, the captain of the rabble, who first came to Wesley's help and rescued him, was so impressed with his spirit and behaviour, that he immediately forsook his gang of godless companions, joined the Methodists, and was received, by Charles Wesley, as a member on trial, only five days after Wesley's deliverance. "What thought you of my brother?" asked Charles Wesley of "honest Munchin." "Think of him!" said he, "I thought he is a *mon* of God; and God was on his side, when so *mony* of us could not kill one *mon*."

It may here be added, that "Munchin" was a nickname only,—a provincial word expressive of coarse, brutal strength. The real name of Wesley's deliverer was George Clifton. He lived in a small house at the foot of Holloway Bank, and never tired of telling, in after days, how God stayed his hand, when he nearly took Wesley's life. He died in Birmingham, at the age of eighty-five, in the year 1789, and was buried in St. Paul's churchyard. It is a notable incident [3] that, while Wesley's persecutors passed quickly away, nearly all who took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, lived, like "honest

[1] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. i., p. 340. [2] Ibid. p. 340.
[3] *Methodist Recorder*, Oct. 12, 1866.

1743 Age 40 Munchin," a long and a peaceful life, and saw their children's children walking in the fear of God.

Unfortunately, the "Staffordshire riots" did not terminate in October, 1743; and, in order to complete the summary, we must trespass, for a moment, on the events of 1744.

We learn from the pamphlet already quoted, "Papers giving an account of the Rise and Progress of Methodism at Wednesbury and in other parishes adjacent," that, after the bold visit of Charles Wesley, Messrs. Graves and Williams, who, for months past, had preached only in private houses, now begun to preach publicly. At Christmas, Whitefield came and spent several days in preaching in the streets with his accustomed eloquence and power; and then, on February 2, 1744, Charles Wesley again entered the field of action. Egginton, the Wednesbury vicar, had drawn up a paper, and sent the crier to give notice, that all the Methodists must sign it, or else their houses would be immediately demolished. It was to this effect, "that they would never read, or sing, or pray together, or hear the Methodist parsons any more." Several signed through fear; and every one who did was mulcted a penny to assist in making the rabble drunk.[1]

This was not more than about a month before Charles Wesley's visit. When he came, however, Egginton was dead; but, in the meantime, not a Methodist in Darlaston had escaped the renewed violence of the vicar's godless mob, except two or three who had bought exemption by giving their purses to the lawless gang. The windows of all the Methodists were broken, neither glass, lead, nor frames remaining. Tables, chairs, chests of drawers, and whatever furniture was not easily removable, were dashed in pieces. Feather beds were torn to shreds, and the feathers strewed about the rooms[2] in all directions.

No craven-hearted parson would have ventured to preach to humanised fiends like these; and yet these were pre-eminently the men whom the Wesleys tried to benefit and save. At the risk of being murdered, they fearlessly told them of their sin and danger. More than once they had hazarded their lives; and now, Charles was in the midst of

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. viii., p. 204. [2] Ibid. vol. i., p. 426.

these begrimed ruffians, as courageous as ever. He escaped, but the poor Methodists were again made to suffer from the more than brutal violence of their fiendish neighbours. 1743 Age 40

One man's wife, about Candlemas, was abused in a manner too horrible to relate; and, because he tried to bring some of the recreants to justice, his windows were broken; his furniture and tools destroyed; all his wife's linen was torn to tatters; his bed and bedstead were cut; and his Bible and Prayer-Book pulled to pieces. On Shrove Tuesday, the house of Francis Ward was forcibly entered, and all his goods were stolen. John Darby's house was broken open, his furniture and five stalls of bees destroyed, and his poultry filched. Other houses were plundered and injured in like manner. Some of the mob were armed with swords, some with clubs, and some with axes. The outrages, if possible, were even worse than those some months before. One man cut Mary Turner's bible into fragments with his axe. Another swore he would beat out Mrs. Sheldon's brains with her fire shovel. Joshua Constable was attacked by an outrageous gang, his house, in part, pulled down, his goods destroyed and stolen, and his wife violently and brutally assaulted. For six days, in the early part of 1744, this lawless riot lasted, and the damage done to the property of the Wednesbury Methodists amounted to a serious sum. Applications for redress were made to not fewer than three magistrates, but to no purpose. The document, containing many of the above facts, was drawn up on February 26, 1744, when the persecuted Methodists remark:—"We keep meeting together morning and evening, are in great peace and love with each other, and are nothing terrified by our adversaries. God grant we may endure to the end!"[1]

Leaving the "black country," we must pass to other scenes of fiendish violence, and yet sacred triumph.

Cornwall, at this period, was as imbruted as Staffordshire. Smuggling was considered an honourable traffic, and the plunder of shipwrecked mariners was accounted a lawful prize. Drunkenness was general; and cockfighting, bullbaiting, wrestling, and hurling were the favourite amusements of the

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 173.

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people. Francis Truscott relates that, at the time when the Wesleys first went to Cornwall, there was a village, about five miles from Helstone, which was literally without a Bible, and which had no religious book whatever, except a single copy of the Book of Common Prayer, kept at the public house. On one occasion, during a terrific storm, when the people feared that the world was ending, they fled in consternation to the tavern, that Tom, the tapster, might secure them protection by reading them a prayer. Having fallen upon their knees, Tom hastily snatched a well thumbed book; and began, with great pomposity, to read about storms, wrecks, and rafts, until his mistress, finding that some mistake was made, cried out, "Tom, that is 'Robin Cruso'!" "No," said Tom, "it is the Prayer-Book;" and on he went until he came to a description of man Friday, when his mistress again vociferated that she was certain Tom was reading "Robin Cruso." "Well, well," said Tom, "suppose I am; there are as good prayers in 'Robin Cruso' as in any other book"; and so Tom proceeded, till the storm abated, and the conscience stricken company dispersed, complacently believing that they had done their duty.[1]

While the people, however, were thus generally sunk in ignorance and vice, there were a few exceptions. Among these were Catherine Quick and eleven others, at St. Ives, who frequently met together to pray, and to read Burkitt's Notes on the New Testament. This godly band of pious people was visited by Captain Turner, a Methodist from Bristol; and this led Catherine Quick and her associates to invite Wesley to visit them.[2]

Charles Wesley was the first to come. Entering St. Ives, on July 16, Mr. Shepherd met him; the boys of the place gave him a rough salute; and Mr. Nance made him his welcome guest. The day after his arrival, he went to church, where the rector preached a railing sermon against the Methodists, or, as he called them, "the new sect, enemies to the Church, seducers, troublers, scribes, pharisees, and hypocrites." Immediately after being thus religiously regaled, Charles and his godly inviters went to the church at

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1820, p. 538. [2] Ibid. 1823, p. 204.

Wednock, where Mr. Hoblin, the curate, poured out such a hotch-potch of railing and foolish lies as might have made even the devil blush. Charles told the preacher, that he had been misinformed; upon which his reverence replied, with more coarseness than courtesy, "You are a liar," and then left him. On the day following, when Charles Wesley went to the market house, at St. Ives, and commenced singing the hundredth psalm, the mob began to beat a drum and shout. Four days later, when he had just named his text, the same unruly ruffians rushed upon his congregation, and threatened to murder them. The sconces of the room were broken, the windows dashed in pieces, and the shutters, benches, and, indeed, everything except the walls, destroyed. They asseverated, that Charles Wesley should not preach again, and lifted up their hands and clubs to strike him. The women were beaten, dragged about, and trampled on without mercy; until, at length, the rascals fell to quarreling among themselves, broke the town clerk's head, and left the room. Two days after, while preaching at Wednock, the minister's mob fell upon the congregation, and *swore* most horribly, that they would be revenged on them for their taking the people from the church, and making such a disturbance on the sabbath day. Sticks and stones were used, and ten cowardly ruffians attacked one unarmed man, beat him with their clubs, and knocked him to the ground. The day following, at St. Ives, the service was broken up by the mob throwing eggs and stones, and swearing they would pull down the walls of the room, whose windows, benches, and sconces they had already ruthlessly destroyed. At Pool, on July 26, the churchwarden shouted, and hallooed, and put his hat to Charles Wesley's mouth to prevent his preaching. 1743 Age 40

All these outrages were principally prompted by the parsons, who continually spoke of the Methodists as popish emissaries, and who, to use the Rev. Mr. Hoblin's fisticuff language, "ought to be driven away by blows, and not by arguments." At length, the mayor of St. Ives appointed twenty new constables to suppress the rioters by force of arms, "and plainly told Mr. Hoblin, the fire and fagot minister, that he would not be perjured to gratify any man's malice."

Charles Wesley came to St. Ives on the 16th of July, and

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set out, on his return to London, on August 8, his brother having summoned him to attend a conference with the adherents of Whitefield and with the Moravians. In this way, his labours in Cornwall were interrupted; but, a fortnight after, his brother, accompanied by John Nelson, John Downes, and Mr. Shepherd, succeeded him. Nelson and Downes had but one horse between them, and, hence, rode by turns. They reached St. Ives on August 30, and found the society increased to about a hundred and twenty, nearly a hundred of whom had found peace with God. John Nelson began to work at his trade as a stonemason; and, as opportunity permitted, preached at St. Just, the Land's End, and other places. John Downes fell ill of a fever, and was unable to preach at all. Wesley and Nelson slept upon the floor, Wesley using Nelson's top coat for a pillow, and Nelson using Burkitt's Notes on the New Testament for his. One morning, at three o'clock, after using this hard bed for a fortnight, Wesley turned over, clapped Nelson on the side, and jocosely said: "Brother Nelson, let us be of good cheer, for the skin is off but one side yet." Their board also was as hard as their bed. They were continually preaching; but "it was seldom," says Nelson, "that any one asked us to eat or drink. One day, as we returned from St. Hilary Downs, Mr. Wesley stopped his horse to pick the blackberries, saying, 'Brother Nelson, we ought to be thankful, that there are plenty of blackberries; for this is the best country I ever saw for getting an appetite, but the worst for getting food.'"[1]

Wesley spent three weeks in Cornwall, leaving Nelson behind him. Upon the whole, he had been kindly treated. The mob at St. Ives, it is true, welcomed him with a loud huzza; and serenaded him before his window with the harmless ditty:—

> "Charles Wesley is come to town,
> To try if he can pull the churches down."

But, during his stay, the only act of violence he met with was, on one occasion, when the mob burst into the room at St. Ives, and a ruffian struck him on the head.

On his way to Cornwall, and also on returning, Wesley

[1] Nelson's Journal.

preached at Exeter, and visited a lad, and a clergyman in prison, both sentenced to suffer death. His vast congregation "in that solemn amphitheatre," as he calls the castle yard, was such an one as he had rarely seen,—"void both of anger, fear, and love." He also preached at the cross in Taunton, where a man, attempting to make disturbance, so exasperated the congregation, that there was a general cry, "Knock the rascal down, beat out his brains!" and Wesley had to interfere to prevent his being roughly handled. He likewise paid a flying visit to the Isles of Scilly, crossing the ocean in a fishing boat, and singing amid the swelling waves :— 1743 Age 46

"When passing through the watery deep,
I ask in faith His promised aid;
The waves an awful distance keep,
And shrink from my devoted head,
Fearless their violence I dare;
They cannot harm,—for God is there."

It has been already stated, that Charles Wesley was summoned from Cornwall to attend a conference in London, consisting of the leading men of the three communities,—the Arminian Methodists, the Calvinistic Methodists, and the Moravians. The object of the conference was, by mutual explanations and concessions, to cultivate a better understanding with each other; so that the parties might avoid all unnecessary collision, and unite, as far as was practicable, in advancing what they believed to be the work of God. Wesley drew up a statement of the questions at issue between himself and Whitefield, with the concessions he was prepared to make.[1] Mr. Jackson says, the project had its origin with Wesley,[2] and perhaps it had; but, a year before this, John Cennick expressed a wish for the same sort of meeting. In a letter to Whitefield's wife, dated May 6, 1742, he writes :—"I have had it much impressed upon my mind, that it would be right in the sight of God, that all our preachers, all Mr. Wesley's, and all the Moravian brethren should meet together. Who knows but we might unite? Or if not, we might consent in principles as far as we can, and

[1] See the substance of this paper, under the year 1741, pp. 349, 350.
[2] Life of C. Wesley, vol. i., p. 350.

1743 Age 40 love one another. At least, I think all *our* preachers should meet, as the apostles did, often. I know it would be for good; but I suspend my judgment to the elder brethren." [1]

It may thus be doubtful whether the proposal for the conference originated with Wesley or with Cennick; but, through no fault of Wesley's, the proposal was abortive. To be present at the conference, Wesley travelled from Newcastle; his brother came all the way from Cornwall; and John Nelson trudged from Yorkshire. But Whitefield, who was in London, seems to have declined the invitation; the Moravians refused to come; and, though Spangenberg had promised to attend, he left England instead of doing so; while James Hutton said, his brethren had orders not to confer at all, unless the archbishop of Canterbury, or the bishop of London, were also present.[2]

This was the last attempt at union; but perhaps it suggested to Wesley's mind the idea of having conferences of his own, which he began to hold twelve months afterwards.

Not a little of the time of the two Wesleys was now employed in pastoralizing the societies they had formed in London, Bristol, and other places. In Bristol, in the month of January, Wesley spoke to each member of society, and rejoiced in finding them neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. He did the same at Kingswood, and remarks: "I cannot understand how any minister can hope ever to give up his account with joy, unless (as Ignatius advises) he knows all his flock by name; not overlooking the men servants and maid servants." In London, he and his brother began visiting the society together, on February 2, which they continued from six in the morning to six at night, until the visiting was completed. The same practice was pursued at Newcastle.

The London society now consisted of nineteen hundred and fifty members; and, before the year was ended, it numbered two and twenty hundred. This was a large church, gathered within the last four years, and needing a more than ordinary amount of pastoral attention. The members only, to say

[1] *Weekly History*, June 19, 1742.
[2] Wesley's Works, vol. ii., p. 28.

nothing of children, servants, and outside hearers, were almost sufficient to fill the Foundery chapel twice over. More room became imperative. Without this, it seemed to be impossible to extend, or even to conserve the work. London had one Methodist chapel already; before the year was ended, it had two others. 1743 Age 40

In the month of May, Wesley had the offer of a chapel in West Street, Seven Dials, which about sixty years before had been built by the French Protestants. He accepted the offer, and opened the chapel as a Methodist place of worship, on Trinity Sunday, the first service lasting from ten o'clock till three. At five, he preached again to an immense congregation at the Great Gardens; then met the leaders; and after them the bands; and yet, at ten o'clock at night, he was less weary than when he began his enormous day's work in the morning. Here, when in London, he and his brother now regularly officiated on Sunday mornings and evenings, read the liturgy, and administered the sacraments. The Lord's supper was celebrated at the morning service on both the first and second Sundays of the month, and the attendance was so numerous, that, in both instances, the service usually lasted at least five hours. This was longer than even Wesley thought desirable, and led him to divide the communicants into three divisions, so that not more than about six hundred might communicate on the same occasion. These were enormous gatherings, with which those of the present day will hardly bear comparison.

Three months after he took possession of the West Street chapel, Wesley became the occupier of a third, which had been built in Bermondsey, Southwark, by a Unitarian. Being vacant, Wesley took it. Some objected to this. "What!" said a zealous woman, "what! will Mr. Wesley preach at Snowsfields? Surely not! there is not such another place in London. The people there are not men, but devils!" This was just the sort of reason to induce Wesley, not to stay away, but go. Accordingly, on August 8, he opened Snowsfields chapel by preaching from the words—"Jesus said, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

Wesley did more than this for the London society.

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Visiting the sick he regarded as an imperative Christian duty. Sending them help was not enough. Besides, to neglect this was not only to neglect a duty, but to lose a means of grace. "One great reason," says Wesley, "why the rich have so little sympathy for the poor, is, because they so seldom visit them." "All," he adds, "who desire to escape the everlasting fire, and to inherit the everlasting kingdom, are equally concerned, according to their power, to practise this important duty."[1] Holding such sentiments, Wesley himself, throughout life, visited the poor and the afflicted, to the utmost of his ability; but, of course, as an itinerant evangelist, when he had done his best, much was left untouched. Hence, in the year 1743, he appointed in London visitors of the sick, as distinct office bearers in his society.[2] Stewards had been appointed already, to receive the contributions of the society, which amounted to nearly £8 per week; and to distribute them, partly in repairing and paying for chapel premises, partly in paying debts, partly in other necessary expenses, and partly in relieving the afflicted and the poor. The stewards, seven in number, were to be frugal; to have no long accounts; to give none, that asked relief, either an ill word or an ill look; and to expect no thanks from man. They met together every Thursday morning at six o'clock, and distributed all the money paid to them up to the previous Tuesday night; so that all receipts and disbursements were concluded within the week. The stewards, however, soon found a difficulty with regard to the afflicted. Some were ready to perish before they heard of them; and, even when they became acquainted with their illness, being persons generally employed in trade, they were unable to visit them as often as they wished. To meet this deficiency, Wesley called together the whole of the London society; showed how impossible it was for the stewards to visit all the sick in all parts of the metropolis; desired the leaders to be more careful in inquiring after sick cases, and in giving early information concerning them; and then appealed to the assembled members and asked for volunteers for this important work. Numbers cheerfully responded, out of whom

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. vii., p. 117. [2] Watson's Life of Wesley, p. 110.

Wesley selected forty-six, whom he judged to be of the most tender, loving spirit. He then divided London into twenty-three districts, and arranged that the sick, in each district, should be visited, by a couple of visitors, three times every week; and that the visitors, besides inquiring into the state of the people's souls, should relieve those of them in want, and should present their accounts to the stewards weekly Wesley writes :— 1743 Age 40

"Upon reflection, I saw how exactly, in this also, we had copied after the primitive church. What were the ancient deacons? What was Phœbe, the deaconess, but such a visitor of the sick?"

Four rules were to be observed :—

"1. Be plain and open in dealing with souls. 2. Be mild, tender, patient. 3. Be cleanly in all you do for the sick. 4. Be not nice."

Wesley adds, five years afterwards :—

"We have ever since had great reason to praise God for His continued blessing on this undertaking. Many lives have been saved, many sicknesses healed, much pain and want prevented or removed. Many heavy hearts have been made glad, many mourners comforted; and the visitors have found, from Him whom they serve, a present reward for all their labour."[1]

The two thousand members of the London society contributed about £400 a year, or, at the rate of a shilling per member per quarter. The Bristol society consisted of seven hundred members, and, after the same ratio, would contribute £140 per year. Eight hundred members at Newcastle would raise £160; and the societies at Kingswood and other places might give £100 additional: thus making the Methodist income, for 1743, something like £800. Out of this, all chapel expenses had to be defrayed; a large proportion was given to the afflicted poor; something was necessary for the contingent expenses of Wesley's helpers; and the remainder,—how much was it?—was perhaps given to the two Wesleys to meet some of their own necessary wants. These were the men preying upon the pockets of the poor, and making themselves a fortune out of other people's money! Such falsehoods were current, and were not entirely disbelieved even by some of Wesley's own relatives.

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. viii., p. 254.

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Poor Emily Wesley, a classical scholar, and no mean poet,—after teaching in a boarding school where she was ill used and worse paid, and after marrying a poor Quaker, who did little for her, and soon left her—was now a penniless and dependent widow, maintained entirely by her two brothers, and living at the Foundery. Emily, in a petulant humour, wrote to her brother John, accusing him of the want of kindness and of natural affection, notwithstanding his reputed riches. John, in reply, wrote one of his most pungent letters, of which the following is a copy :—

"NEWCASTLE, *June* 30, 1743.

"DEAR EMILY,—Once, I think, I told you my mind freely before ; I am constrained to do so once again. You say, 'From the time of my coming to London, till last Christmas, you would not do me the least kindness.' Do I dream, or you ? Whose house were you in for three months, and upwards ? By whose money were you sustained ? It is a poor case, that I am forced to mention these things.

"But, 'I would not take you lodgings in fifteen weeks.' No, nor should I have done in fifteen years. I never once imagined, that you expected *me* to do this ! Shall I leave the word of God to serve tables ? You should know I have quite other things to mind ; temporal things I shall mind less and less.

"'When I was removed you never concerned yourself about me.' That is not the fact. What my brother does, I do. Besides, I myself spoke to you abundance of times, before Christmas last.

"'When I was at preaching, you would scarce speak to me.' Yes ; at least as much as to my sister Wright, or, indeed, as I did to any else at those times.

"'I impute all your unkindness to one principle you hold, that natural affection is a great weakness, if not a sin.' What is this principle I hold ? That natural affection is a sin ? or that adultery is a virtue ? or that Mahommed was a prophet of God ? and that Jesus Christ was a son of Belial ? You may as well impute *all* these principles to me as *one*. I hold one just as much as the other. O Emmy, never let that idle, senseless accusation come out of your mouth.

"Do you hold that principle, 'that we ought to be just (*i. e.* pay our debts) before we are merciful' ? If I held it, I should not give one shilling for these two years, either to you or any other. And, indeed, I have, for some time, stayed my hand ; so that I give next to nothing, except what I give to my relations. And I am often in doubt with regard to that, not whether natural affection be not a sin ; but whether it ought to supersede common justice. You know nothing of my temporal circumstances, and the straits I am in, almost continually ; so that were it not for the reputation of my great riches, I could not stand one week.

"I have now done with myself, and have only a few words concerning

you. You are of all creatures the most unthankful to God and man. I stand amazed at you. How little have you profited under such means of improvement! Surely whenever your eyes are opened, whenever you see your own tempers, with the advantages you have enjoyed, you will make no scruple to pronounce yourself, (whores and murderers not excepted,) the very chief of sinners.—I am, etc., 1743 Age 40

"JOHN WESLEY."[1]

This is a caustic letter; and yet John Wesley was a loving brother. For nearly thirty years afterwards, Emily Harper was a resident in the preachers' house at West Street, was a constant attendant on the ministry of her brothers, and died in peace, at the age of eighty, about the year 1772.

Much has been already related respecting the Methodist persecutions of 1743; but the whole has not been told. At Newcastle, three Dissenting ministers agreed together to exclude all from the holy communion, who would not refrain from attending Wesley's ministry. One of them publicly affirmed, that the Methodist preachers were all papists, and that their doctrine was Popery. Another preached against them, and said, "Many texts in the Bible are for them; but you ought not to mind these texts; for the papists have put them in." At Cowbridge, in Wales, when Wesley attempted to preach, the mob shouted, cursed, blasphemed, and threw showers of stones almost without intermission. At Bristol, a clergyman preached, in several of the city churches, against the *upstart* Methodists; and was about to do so in the church of St. Nicholas, when, after naming his text, he was seized with a rattling in his throat, fell backward against the pulpit door, and, on the Sunday following, expired. At Egham, Wesley went to church, and listened to one of the most miserable sermons he ever heard; stuffed with dull, senseless, improbable lies against those whom the parson complimented with the title of "false prophets."

At Sheffield, the ministers of the town so inflamed the people, that they were ready to tear the Methodists to pieces. An army officer drew his sword, and presented it at Charles Wesley's breast. The meeting-house was ruthlessly demolished, and the mob encouraged by the constable. The windows of Mr. Bennett's house, in which Charles Wesley

[1] Clarke's "Wesley Family," vol. ii., p. 267.

1743 Age 40 lodged, were smashed to atoms; and stones flew thick and fast in all directions. Near Barley Hall, a few miles from Sheffield, Charles Wesley and David Taylor were assaulted with a storm of stones, eggs, and dirt; David was wounded in the head and lost his hat; and the clothes of his companion were besmeared with filth.[1]

At Hampton, in Gloucestershire, the mob threatened to make aprons of Whitefield's gown; broke a young lady's arm; threw Mr. Adams twice into a pool of water; seized Whitefield for the purpose of casting him into a pit of lime;[2] and, from four in the afternoon till midnight, continued rioting, and declaring that no Anabaptists, etc., should preach there, upon pain of being first put into a skin-pit, and afterwards into a brook. Women were pulled down the stairs by the hair of their heads; Mr. Williams was twice thrown into a hole full of noisome reptiles and stagnant water, and was beaten, and dragged along the kennel; while the Methodists, in general, were mobbed to such an extent, that many expected to be murdered, and hid themselves in holes and corners, to avoid their enemies.

All this was bad enough; but there was something else, perhaps, quite as painful. The press, in its attacks, became as virulent as ever. Among other publications issued, was the following: "The Notions of the Methodists fully disproved, with a Vindication of the Clergy of the Church of England from their Aspersions. In two Letters to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley. Newcastle: 1743." In this precious morsel, of near a hundred pages, the Methodists are branded as "conceited, vain boasters," and "ignorant, giddy, presumptuous enthusiasts." Wesley is accused of "compassing sea and land to gain proselytes"; of "making unwarrantable dissensions in the Church"; and of "prejudicing the people, wherever he came, against his brethren the clergy." "You are," writes this northern pamphleteer, "guilty both of schism and rebellion, which are two very grievous and damnable sins. You are the sower and ringleader of dissension, endeavouring with unwearied assiduity to set the flock at variance

[1] C. Wesley's Journal.
[2] Whitefield's Works, vol. ii., pp. 33, 35.

with their ministers and each other. You assume to yourself great wisdom and high attainments in all spiritual knowledge; but it requires no depth of understanding, to judge whether your character and conduct suit that of the spiritually or carnally wise man in St. James. You scruple not to accuse the clergy of almost universally teaching devilish doctrine, and of being deceitful workers; but, however you may boast of your conversions, you will in the end render yourselves the ridicule of mankind. You go from one end of the nation to another, lamenting the heresies of your brethren, and instilling into the people's minds, that they are led into errors by their pastors; when the truth is, you are perverting them with solifidian and antinomian blasphemies. Consider, sir, how wicked and abominable in the sight of God it is for you to misrepresent your brethren to the people, in this scandalous manner. The mischief is, the giddy multitude, like the Athenians, love to spend their time in nothing else but hearing some new thing. They are tired with the solid, plain, and rational way of preaching they have been accustomed to in the Church, and think it dry and insipid in comparison of the powerful charms of that ecstatic eloquence, those highflown metaphors, those pretty rhymes, those taking gestures, with which you tickle and bewitch them. You give a deplorable account of the debt you have contracted by the building of your meeting-houses; but unless you can bring better proof than you have hitherto done, of the necessity there is to give yourself all this trouble and expense, all wise and considerate men, without any breach of charity, will look upon subscriptions for carrying on your designs, as little less than picking the poor people's pockets, and robbing them of that which should maintain their families."

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Such is a specimen of the malignant slanders cast upon Wesley by this northern clergyman.

It has been already stated, that the Rev. Henry Piers preached, in 1742, before the clergy of the deanery of Shoreham, a visitation sermon, which Wesley revised, and which, at the time of its delivery, gave great offence. The preacher chosen for this office, in 1743, was of another stamp; and his sermon also was published, with the following title: "Of

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Speaking as the Oracles of God. A Sermon, preached before the Reverend the Clergy of the Deanery of Shoreham, at the Visitation, held in the Parish Church of Farningham, on Thursday, May 19, 1743. By John Andrews, M.A., Vicar of that Church." 8vo, 30 pages. The world would have sustained no loss, if Mr. Andrews' sermon had not been printed. The preacher sneers at the fancies of theological empirics, in one paragraph, and, in the next, speaks of the doctrines of "justification and regeneration as questions and strifes of words, which profit not." Mr. Piers' visitation sermon is attacked on the subject of faith; and the assembled clergy of the deanery of Shoreham are officially informed, that "every one, that is rightly and duly baptized, not only receives the outward ordinance, but the inward and spiritual grace annexed to it."

Another pamphlet, published at this period, was, "A Fine Picture of Enthusiasm, chiefly drawn by Dr. Scott; with an application to our modern Methodists." 40 pages. Dedicated to the Bishop of London. In this miserable *morceau*, we are told, that "there are thousands flocking after those enthusiasts, Whitefield and Wesley, who appear to be deluding crowds of people into a passionate, mechanical religion." One of them, at least, is suspected to be a masked Jesuit; and both have courted persecution, but have had a mortifying disappointment. The singing of the Methodists is enchanting, and their tunes the most melodious that ever were composed for church music; but their hymns are irrational, and, like their prayers, dwell upon a word, or are immediate addresses to the Son of God, and represent Him as much more compassionate to the human race than God the Father ever was. "One of these artful teachers," says the writer, "has ordered the tickets for his people to be impressed with the crucifix; and this, with their *confessions* and other customs, intimates a manifest fondness for the orthodox institutions of the Church of Rome. These *modest* teachers have not failed to trumpet their own extraordinary piety and holiness, as well as their extraordinary knowledge and illumination; and this has been done with great effect among the people. Their doctrine has very generally occasioned disorder in the passions of their hearers; the screamings and convulsions

common among them, in their public assemblies, being called convictions. Vast numbers have gone melancholy among them. Many have been led to quit their lawful and necessary employment; to neglect their husbands, children, and families; and from useful members in society have become mopes and visionaries, incapable of pursuing their proper business, or of supporting themselves with decency." 1743 Age 40

A fourth publication, belonging to the year 1743, was "The Progress of Methodism in Bristol; or, the Methodist Unmasked: wherein the doctrines, discipline, policy, divisions, and successes of that novel sect are fully detected and properly displayed in Hudibrastick verse, by an Impartial Hand." To which is added, by way of appendix, the Paper-Controversy between Mr. Robert Williams, supported by Thomas Christie, Esq., Recorder of Savannah, and the Rev. Mr. Wesley, supported only by his own integrity and assurance. Together with authentic extracts, taken from a late narrative of the state of Georgia, relating to the conduct of that gentleman during his abode in that colony. Bristol: 1743." 16mo, 72 pages.

Among other things, this mendacious pamphlet contains an affidavit, sworn by Robert Williams before Stephen Clutterbuck, Mayor of Bristol, to the effect, that two freeholders at Savannah became bail for Wesley's appearance at the sessions to take his trial, and that he dishonourably escaped from the colony and left his bondsmen in the lurch. To this Wesley replied: "Captain Robert Williams, you know in your own soul, that every word of this is a pure invention, without one grain of truth from the beginning of it to the end. What amends can you ever make, either to God, or to me, or to the world? Into what a dreadful dilemma have you brought yourself! You must either openly retract an open slander, or you must wade through thick and thin to support it, till that God, to whom I appeal, shall maintain His own cause, and sweep you away from the earth."[1]

Whitefield and Wesley, in this scurrilous production, are accused of preaching to get money, and of placing men with plates at each gate and stile of the fields in which they

[1] "Progress of Methodism in Bristol." 1743.

1743 Age 40 harangued the people, to gather collections for the Orphan House in Georgia and the Room in Bristol. Wesley is charged with pretending to work miracles; for, upon a company of women falling down before him, he first of all prays over them, then sings a hymn, and then exorcises devils. In the midst of a most severe winter, he had taken his converts, early in the morning, through frost and snow, to the river Froom, at Baptist Mills, where, on the ice being broken, he and they went into the water, where, with "limbs shuddering and teeth *hackering*," he baptized or dipped them. Class-meetings are described, the leaders of which note the sins of those who confess to them, register them in a book, and, in due season, "report them to John, who admonishes one, reprimands another, and expels a third." At first, each member gave a penny, but now the *lowest* payment was twopence weekly. At present there were forty-eight classes in Bristol, each class containing "an even dozen." After the watchnight meetings at Kingswood,

> "Men, boys, and girls, and women too,
> Come strolling home at morning two:"

and at the nightly lovefeasts, "the ghostly father and all his sons draw near—

> "The pious sisters, wives, and misses,
> And greet them well with holy kisses."

But enough of this. What did Wesley himself publish in 1743?

1. "The Nature, Design, and General Rules of the United Societies, in London, Bristol, Kingswood, and Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: printed by John Gooding, on the Side. Price one penny. 1743." Twelve pages.

This, the first edition of the "Rules," is signed by John Wesley only, and bears date February 23, 1743. A second edition was issued, signed by both John and Charles Wesley, and dated May 1, 1743. The first edition has annexed "A Prayer for those who are convinced of Sin," consisting of eighteen stanzas of four lines each, and from which is taken the beautiful hymn, numbered 462, in the Wesleyan Hymn-Book, and beginning with the line, "O let the prisoners'

mournful cries"; a production admirably appropriate to the circumstances in which the members of the first Methodist societies were placed. 1743 Age 40

Societies cannot exist without rules. Up to the present, Wesley had regulated his societies by *vivâ voce* instructions and direct authority; but, as the Methodists increased and multiplied, this became more difficult, and hence the publication now mentioned. The Rules were both written and published at Newcastle upon Tyne. Eleven days after the date they bear, Wesley read them to the Newcastle society, and desired the members seriously to consider whether they were willing to observe them. The careful reader will remark the designation which Wesley gives to his societies, as well as his description of their "nature and design." They are not "Wesleyan," or "Methodist," but "United Societies." As compared with the rules now in use, there are a few variations in the original edition deserving of being noticed. For instance, in the list of the leader's duties, the first in order was, to receive from each person in his class, once a week, what the members were willing to give toward *the relief of the poor*. This is now altered thus: "to receive what they are willing to give for the *support of the gospel*." The present rule forbidding "*brother* going to law *with brother*," in the first and several subsequent editions, simply read, "going to law." To the original rule, "the giving or taking things on usury," has been added the words, "that is, unlawful interest;" and to the rule prohibiting "uncharitable or unprofitable conversation," there was added, in the fourth edition, published in 1744, "especially, speaking evil of ministers or those in authority," words now changed for "magistrates or ministers." In the list of things forbidden in the present Rules, is the important one, "borrowing without a probability of paying; or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them;" this is not in the first editions. And among the duties enjoined is "*family* and private prayer"; but in the first edition the word *family* is not found, though, in the fourth edition, published twelve months afterwards, it was inserted.

The curious reader will forgive these trifles. They are all the variations found in the first edition of the Rules, as com-

1743 Age 40 pared with the Rules now in use. The Rules themselves are too well known to require insertion.

2. Another of Wesley's publications, in 1743, was "A Word in Season; or, Advice to a Soldier." 12mo, six pages. This is a model tract, and shows that, from the first, soldiers excited Wesley's sympathy.

3. "Thoughts on Marriage and Celibacy." 12mo, twelve pages. A strange production, substantially embodied in the piece in Wesley's collected works, entitled, "Thoughts on a Single Life" (see vol. xxiv., page 252, orig. edit.). What shall we say of this? Wesley admits, that the popish doctrine forbidding to marry is a doctrine of devils, and that a person may be as holy in a married as in a single state; but he proceeds to show, that the happy few who have power to abstain from marriage are free from a thousand nameless domestic trials which are found sooner or later in every family. They are at liberty from the greatest of all entanglements, the loving one creature above all others; they have leisure to improve themselves; and, having no wife or children to provide for, may give all their worldly substance to God. Those highly favoured celibates are exhorted to prize the advantages they enjoy, and to be careful to keep them; they are to avoid all needless conversation, much more all intimacy with those of the other sex; all softness and effeminacy; all delicacy and needless self indulgence; and all sloth, inactivity, and indolence. They are to sleep no more than nature requires; to use as much bodily exercise as they can; to fast, and practise self denial; to wait upon the Lord without distraction; and to give all their time and their money to God. On the whole, without disputing whether the married or single life is the more perfect state, Wesley concludes by adding, "We may safely say, Blessed are they who abstain from things lawful in themselves, in order to be more devoted to God."

Thirty years afterwards, when Wesley was twitted for marrying, after expressing such opinions, he averred, that his opinions with regard to the advantages of a single life were still unchanged; and that he entered the married state "for reasons best known to himself."[1] This was a lame reply to a

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. x., p. 417.

reasonable reflection on inconsistency. Wesley's tract was a mistake; or, if not, Wesley ought to have adopted his own principles, and have lived and died a celibate. 1743 Age 40

4. In July, 1743, Wesley wrote his "Instructions for Children," which reached a second edition in 1745, 12mo, 38 pages. Prefixed, was a preface, addressed "to all parents and schoolmasters," stating, that a great part of the tract was translated from the French, and that it contained "the true principles of the Christian education of children," and that these "should in all reason be instilled into them, as soon as they can distinguish good from evil."

The first twelve lessons are a catechism, respecting God, the creation and the fall of man, man's redemption, the means of grace, hell, and heaven. Then follow lessons how to regulate our desires, understanding, joy, and practices.

Repenting is defined as "being thoroughly convinced of our sinfulness, guilt, and helplessness"; faith in Christ, as "a conviction that Christ has loved *me* and given Himself for *me*;" holiness, as "the love of God and of all mankind for God's sake." Wesley asserts that "they who teach children to love praise, train them for the devil"; and that "fathers and mothers who give children everything they like, are the worst enemies they have."

Wesley considered these "Instructions for Children," extracted from Abbé Fleury and M. Poiret, superior, "for depth of sense and plainness of language, to anything in the English tongue."[1] The Church Catechism he declared to be "utterly improper for children of six or seven years old," and thought "it would be far better to teach them the short catechism, prefixed to the 'Instructions.'"[2] Accordingly, he requested all his preachers to give children the "Instructions," and to encourage them in committing the book to memory; while they themselves were to make it the subject of special study.[3]

Wesley's attention to children is proverbial. "When I was a child," said Robert Southey, "I was in a house, in Bristol, where Wesley was. On running downstairs before him, with a beautiful little sister of my own, he overtook us

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xi., p. 324.
[2] Ibid. vol. xiii., p. 31. [3] Ibid. vol. viii., pp. 293, 304.

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on the landing, when he lifted my sister in his arms and kissed her. Placing her on her feet again, he then put his hand upon my head, and blessed me; and I feel," continued the bard, his eyes glistening with tears, and yet in a tone of grateful and tender recollection, "I feel as though I had the blessing of that good man upon me still."[1]

In Wesley's well known sermon on "Family Religion," he lays it down that "the wickedness of children is generally owing to the fault or neglect of their parents." The souls of children ought to be fed as often as their bodies. Methodists are exhorted not to send their sons "to any of the large public schools (for they are nurseries of all manner of wickedness), but to a private school, kept by some pious man, who endeavours to instruct a small number of children in religion and learning together." He raises the same objection to "large boarding schools" for girls; for "in these seminaries, the children teach one another pride, vanity, affectation, intrigue, artifice, and, in short, everything which a Christian woman ought not to learn." He adds: "I never yet knew a pious, sensible woman, that had been bred at a large boarding school, who did not aver, one might as well send a young maid to be bred in Drury Lane."[2]

This is sweeping language; but at that period it was not without truth.

5. Another of Wesley's publications, in 1743, was, "A Practical Treatise on Christian Perfection. Extracted from a late author." 12mo, 115 pages. This was an abridgment of William Law's pungent book, published in 1726.

6. Another was an abridgment of Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," 12mo, 49 pages, price fourpence. Little did Wesley think that, within a hundred years, the whole of the glorious dreamer's immortal work would be sold for a fourth of the price charged for his own fragment.

7. Wesley's last, and most important work, which reached a second edition in the year it was published, was "An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion," 12mo, 53 pages.[3]

[1] Everett's Life of Clarke. [2] Wesley's Works, vol. vii., p. 80.

[3] It is a mistake to say, as is done in the edition of Wesley's collected works, and in some of the Methodist periodicals, that the "Earnest Appeal" was written and published in 1744.

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This was a clarion cry which created greater consternation than ever in the camp of Wesley's enemies. First of all, he describes religion—the faith by which it is attained—and its reasonableness. Then, turning from those who do not receive the Christian system to those who say they do, he charges them, in the name of God, either to profess themselves infidels, or to *be* Christians; either to cast off the Bible, or their sins. "A common swearer, a sabbath breaker, a whoremonger, a drunkard, who says he believes the Scripture is of God, is a monster upon earth, the greatest contradiction to his own, as well as to the reason of all mankind." After this, Wesley replies to the objections raised against Methodist doctrines, and to the calumny, that he and his coadjutors were papists in disguise, undermining the Church, and making preaching the means of replenishing their purses. It had been reported, that he received £1300 a year at the Foundery only, over and above what he received from Bristol, Kingswood, Newcastle, and other places. To this he answers, that the moneys given by the Methodists never come into his hands at all; but are received and expended by the stewards, in relieving the poor, and in buying, erecting, or repairing chapels; and that, so far from there being any overplus when this was done, he himself, at this moment, was in debt to the amount of £650, on account of the meeting-houses in London, Bristol, and Newcastle. He had "deliberately thrown up his ease, most of his friends, his reputation, and that way of life which of all others was most agreeable both to his natural temper and education; he had toiled day and night, spent all his time and strength, knowingly destroyed a firm constitution, and was hastening into weakness, pain, diseases, death,—to gain a debt of six or seven hundred pounds." Then addressing himself to his brother clergy, he asks:—

"For what price will you preach eighteen or nineteen times every week; and this throughout the year? What shall I give you to travel seven or eight hundred miles, in all weathers, every two or three months? For what salary will you abstain from all other diversions than the doing good, and the praising God? I am mistaken if you would not prefer strangling to such a life, even with thousands of gold and silver.

"I will now simply tell you my sense of these matters, whether you will hear or whether you will forbear. Food and raiment I have; such food

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as I choose to eat, and such raiment as I choose to put on: I have a place where to lay my head: I have what is needful for life and godliness: and I apprehend this is all the world can afford. The kings of the earth can give me no more. For as to gold and silver, I count it dung and dross; I trample it under my feet; I esteem it just as the mire of the streets. I desire it not; I seek it not; I only fear lest any of it should cleave to me, and I should not be able to shake it off before my spirit returns to God. I will take care (God being my helper), that none of the accursed thing shall be found in my tents when the Lord calleth me hence. Hear ye this, all you who have discovered the treasures which I am to leave behind me; if I leave behind me £10,—above my debts and my books, or what may happen to be due on account of them,—you and all mankind bear witness against me, that I lived and died a thief and a robber."

Wesley kept his word; for, within twelve months of his decease, he closed his cash-book with the following words, written with a tremulous hand, so as to be scarcely legible:—"For upwards of eighty-six years, I have kept my accounts exactly; I will not attempt it any longer, being satisfied with the continual conviction, that I save all I can, and give all I can; that is, all I have."

1744.

WESLEY spent more than half of the year 1744 in London and its immediate neighbourhood. He made about half-a-dozen visits to Bristol; and three months were occupied in a tour to Cornwall, thence to Yorkshire and Newcastle, and thence to London. 1744 Age 41

Charles Wesley spent the year in London, Bristol, Cornwall, Staffordshire, Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, at Newcastle, Nottingham, Sheffield, and other intervening places.

Whitefield commenced the year with rejoicing over the birth of his first-born,—a boy expected to be a minister, and publicly baptized in the Tabernacle, where thousands, on the occasion, joined in singing a doggrel hymn, written by an aged and doting widow. On the 8th of February, this infant prodigy suddenly expired in the Bell Inn, Gloucester, where Whitefield himself was born; and, after being taken to the church in which Whitefield was baptized, first communicated, and first preached, was then buried, Whitefield returning to London deeply pondering the meaning of what he calls "this blessed riddle." The next four months were chiefly spent in the metropolis; after which he and his wife repaired to Plymouth for the purpose of sailing to America. Here they were detained for several weeks, waiting for the convoy in whose company the voyage was to be attempted. During the interval, Whitefield preached in the town and neighbourhood with great success, and was nearly murdered by a villain, who beat him most unmercifully with his golden-headed cane. At length, he set sail in company with nearly one hundred and fifty ships; and, after not a few adventures, landed in New England, at the end of October, but was so extremely ill, that, for several weeks, he was almost incapable of preaching. In point of fact, Whitefield preached but very little, during the year 1744, except in London and in Plymouth, and in their respective vicinities.

One of the chief events of 1744 was the threat of a French

1744 Age 41 invasion. On the 15th of February, the king sent a message to the houses of parliament, to the effect, that he had received undoubted intelligence, that the eldest son of the pretender to his crown was arrived in France, and that preparations were being made to invade England.

Parliament replied, that they looked upon such a design with the greatest indignation and abhorrence, and would use every effort to frustrate and defeat so desperate and insolent an attempt.

Great excitement followed. The coast was watched with the utmost care. A double guard was mounted at the Tower, and also at St. James's. All military officers were ordered to their posts of duty. Workmen in the king's yards were directed to wear arms and accoutrements, and to be exercised every morning; and instructions were given to the militia of the county of Kent, to assemble at the earliest notice.[1] The Habeas Corpus act was suspended, and a proclamation was issued for a general fast. All papists and reputed papists were forbidden to remain within ten miles of the cities of Westminster and London. The Earl of Barrymore was arrested and committed to the Tower, on the charge of enlisting men for the Pretender. Loyal addresses were presented to the king by the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, by the merchants of London, by the convocation of the province of Canterbury, by the Quakers, by the Protestant Dissenters, and by many others. The city of Dublin offered a reward of £6000 for apprehending the Pretender, or his son, either alive or dead, should they attempt to land in Ireland; and sixty thousand fire arms and accoutrements were seized in suspected houses in the southern parts of that island. War was declared against France on the 29th of March, and the whole kingdom seemed to be inflamed with martial ardour.

How did this affect Wesley? Two days after the king informed parliament of the threatened invasion, Wesley and his London society held a day of solemn fasting and prayer. When the proclamation was published requiring all papists to leave London, though he had appointed to go out of town, he

[1] *London Magazine*, 1744.

determined to stay, so as to cut off all occasion of reproach; but on the 2nd of March (the last day mentioned in the proclamation), while he was at a house in Spitalfields, a magistrate and the parish officers came in search of papists. Wesley was glad of the opportunity to explain the principles and the practices of the Methodists. The searchers were satisfied, and Wesley was allowed to depart in peace, a large mob merely gaping, staring, and hallooing as loud as they were able. Some of his friends pressed him to write an address to the king, on behalf of the Methodists. He did so, and described them as "a people scattered and peeled, and trodden underfoot; traduced as inclined to Popery, and consequently disaffected to his majesty." They were, however, "a part of the Protestant Church established in these kingdoms; they detested the fundamental doctrines of the Church of Rome; and were steadily attached to his majesty's royal person and illustrious house, and ready to obey him to the uttermost, in all things which they conceived to be agreeable to the written word of God." "Silver and gold," he adds, "most of us must own, we have none; but such as we have we humbly beg your majesty to accept, together with our hearts and prayers." Charles Wesley objected to the sending of this address *in the name of the Methodists*, because it would constitute them a sect, or at least would *seem to allow* that they were a body distinct from the national Church. He wished his brother to guard against this, and then, in the name of the Lord, to address the king.[1] Upon further consideration the address was laid aside.

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Wesley's troubles were not ended. On the 20th of March, he received a summons from the Surrey magistrates, to appear at the court at St. Margaret's Hill. He did so, and asked, "Has any one anything to lay to my charge?" None replied; but, at length, one of the magistrates said, "Sir, are you willing to take the oaths to his majesty, and to sign the declaration against Popery?" Wesley replied, "I am"; which he did accordingly, and was permitted to depart in peace.

Why was this? Besides the general calumny cast upon

[1] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. i., p. 354.

1744 Age 41 the Methodists, that they were papists, it was at this time currently reported, that Wesley had recently been seen with the Pretender in France. Might not this be the reason of the unnecessary and annoying summons to appear at St. Margaret's Hill?

In the same month, a warrant was issued, by a magistrate of the west riding of Yorkshire, to compel the attendance of five witnesses to give evidence at Wakefield, that they had heard Charles Wesley speak "treasonable words, as praying for the banished, or for the Pretender." At the time appointed, March 15, Charles himself appeared in the magisterial court, and engaged to prove, that all the Methodists, "to a man, were true members of the Church of England, and loyal subjects of his majesty, King George"; and then desired their worships to administer to him the oaths. All the summoned witnesses retracted their accusations; and yet the Methodist itinerant was insulted at the door of the magistrates' room, for eight long hours, when Mr. justice Burton, with consummate coolness, told him he might go, for they had nought against him. "Sir," said Charles, "that is not sufficient: I cannot depart till my character is cleared. It is no trifling matter. Even my life is concerned in the charge." At length, their worships reluctantly acknowledged, in explicit terms, that his "loyalty was unquestionable"; and he took his leave for Birstal, where the Methodists of the neighbourhood met him on a hill, and joined him in singing "praises lustily, and with a good courage." All this arose out of one of the witnesses having heard him praying, on the 12th of February, that "the Lord would call home His banished"; the words being used, of course, in a sense purely spiritual.

Other inconveniences and acts of violence arose out of the threatened invasion of the French. John Slocomb, a poor baker's boy, who was now one of Wesley's preachers in Cornwall, was arrested, under a press warrant, and taken by his own uncle to prison, where he was kept a week, and then brought before the commissioners, who, finding no cause to punish or detain him, were obliged, at last, notwithstanding all their threatenings, to let him go. In Nottingham, two other preachers, John Healey and Thomas Westall, were

similarly arrested, the magistrates demanding their horses for the king's service, and refusing to believe they had none till they sent and searched. The case of John Nelson is known to every one, and will ever stand as one of the most sublime and tragic chapters in Methodistic history. John Downes, another itinerant, while preaching at Epworth, was seized and pressed for the king's service, and sent as a prisoner to Lincoln gaol. And then, to all these must be added the mournful case of Thomas Beard, a quiet and peaceable man, who was torn from his trade, and wife and children, in Yorkshire, and sent away as a soldier, for no other crime, either committed or pretended, than that of calling sinners to repentance; and who, while lodged in the hospital at Newcastle, died; and, as one of the first martyrs among the Methodists, escaped from his cruel enemies on earth, to the company of the beatified in heaven. 1744 Age 41

Thus did the hot-headed friends of King George II. do their utmost to make leal Methodists disloyal to the throne and house of Hanover; but the effort failed; for, from first to last, more faithful subjects than Wesley's followers the throne of England has never had. "It is my religion," wrote Wesley, more than thirty years after this, "which obliges me to put men in mind to be subject to principalities and powers. Loyalty is with me an essential branch of religion, and which I am sorry any Methodist should forget. There is the closest connection, therefore, between my religious and political conduct; the selfsame authority enjoining me to fear God, and to honour the king."[1]

Two events occurred, in the year 1744, which deserve special mention; the first Methodist conference, and Wesley's last university sermon.

The conference began on Monday, June 25, and continued the five following days. It was held at the Foundery, London; and consisted of the two Wesleys, and four other clergymen, namely, John Hodges, Henry Piers, Samuel Taylor, and John Meriton; also of four lay preachers—Thomas Richards, Thomas Maxfield, John Bennet, and John Downes.[2]

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 406.
[2] Smith's "History of Methodism," vol. i., p. 227.

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Mr. Hodges was the rector of Wenvo, in Wales, a good man, who, from the first, was friendly to the Methodists, and who showed his love for Wesley, in 1758, by writing him a reproof for the tartness of some of his controversial writings, and which Wesley had the honest manliness to publish in his *Arminian Magazine.*

Mr. Piers has been already noticed. Samuel Taylor was the great great grandson of the celebrated Dr. Rowland Taylor, of Hadleigh, in Suffolk, who was forcibly ejected from his church; whom Gardiner, from the woolsack, addressed as "a knave, a traitor, and a villain"; whom Bonner was about to strike with his crosier, and was only hindered by Taylor telling him he would strike again; and who, amid the tears and prayers of his afflicted flock, was put into a pitch barrel, by the bloodthirsty papists, on the 9th of February, 1555, and was set on fire, one zealous vagabond flinging a fagot at his head, and another impatient ruffian cleaving his skull with a halbert, while he was singing in the flames, "In God have I put my trust, I will not fear what man can do unto me." The descendant of this brave-hearted martyr partook of his ancestor's zealous and heroic spirit. He was vicar of Quinton in Gloucestershire; but his heart was larger than his parish. Like Wesley, he went out into the highways and hedges, and was a sharer in the brutal persecutions of Wednesbury, Darlaston, and other places. Richard Whatcoat, one of the first Methodist bishops in America, when a child, sat under his ministry, and received impressions which he never lost.[1] As a preacher, Mr. Taylor was zealous, pathetic, and powerful. He died about the year 1750.[2]

Mr. Meriton had been educated in one of the universities, and was now a clergyman from the Isle of Man.[3] The last years of his life seem to have been chiefly spent in accompanying the two Wesleys in their preaching excursions, and in assisting them in the chapels they had built. He died in 1753.

[1] Life of Whatcoat, by Fry.
[2] Atmore's "Methodist Memorial," p. 411.
[3] Wesley's Works, vol. i., p. 302.

Of the four lay members of the first Methodist conference, three afterwards left Wesley, and became ministers of other churches. John Downes was the only one who lived and died a Methodist. 1744 Age 41

The day before the conference commenced was one to be remembered. Besides the ordinary preaching services, a lovefeast was held, at which six ordained ministers were present; and, during the day, the sacrament was administered to the whole of the London society, now numbering between two and three thousand members. At this grand sacramental service five clergymen assisted.

On the day following, the conference was opened, with solemn prayer, a sermon by Charles Wesley, and the baptism of an adult, who there and then found peace with God.[1] The three points debated were: 1. What to teach. 2. How to teach. 3. How to regulate doctrine, discipline, and practice.

In reference to the first point, it was settled that, to be justified is to be pardoned, and received into God's favour; that faith, preceded by repentance, is the condition of justification; that repentance is a conviction of sin; that faith, in general, is a Divine, supernatural *elenchos* of things not seen; and that justifying faith is a conviction, by the Holy Ghost, that Christ loved me, and gave Himself for me; that no man can be justified and not know it; that the immediate fruits of justifying faith are peace, joy, love, power over all outward sin, and power to keep down inward sin; that wilful sin is inconsistent with justifying faith; that no believer need ever again come into condemnation; that works are necessary for the continuance of faith, which cannot be lost but for want of them; and that St. Paul and St. James do not contradict each other, when one says Abraham was not justified by works, and the other that he was, because they do not speak of the same justification, and because they do not speak of the same works,—St. Paul speaking of works that precede faith, and St. James of works that spring from it.

The Conference further agreed, that Adam's sin is imputed to all mankind in the sense, that in consequence of such

[1] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. i., p. 367.

1744 Age 41 sin—(1) our bodies are mortal; (2) our souls disunited from God, and of a sinful, devilish nature; and (3) we are liable to death eternal. It was further agreed, that the Bible never expressly affirms, that God imputes the righteousness of Christ to any, but rather, that faith is imputed to us for righteousness. At the same time, the Conference conceived that, by the merits of Christ, all men are cleared from the guilt of Adam's actual sin; that their bodies will become immortal after the resurrection; that their souls receive a capacity of spiritual life, and an actual spark or seed thereof; and that all believers are reconciled to God and made partakers of the Divine nature.

Sanctification was defined, a renewal in the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness; to be a *perfect Christian* is to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, implying the destruction of all inward sin; and faith is the condition and instrument by which such a state of grace is obtained.

Proceeding to other matters, the Conference resolved to defend the doctrine of the Church of England both by their preaching and living; to obey the bishops in all things indifferent, and to observe the canons as far as they could with a safe conscience; and, finally, to exert themselves to the utmost not to entail a schism in the Church, by their hearers forming themselves into a distinct sect; though they agreed that they must not neglect the present opportunity of saving souls, for fear of consequences which might possibly or probably happen, after they were dead.

The belief was expressed, that the design of God in raising up the preachers, called Methodists, was to reform the nation, more particularly the Church; and to spread scriptural holiness through the land. It was decided that, wherever they preached, they ought to endeavour to form societies, because where societies were not formed, the preacher would not be able to give proper instructions to them that were convinced of sin; nor the people to watch over one another in love, bear one another's burdens, and build up each other in faith and holiness. It was stated, that the Methodists were divided into four sections; namely, the united societies, the bands, the select societies, and the penitents. The united

societies, who were the most numerous, consisted of awakened persons. The bands were selected from these, and consisted of those who were supposed to have remission of sins. The select societies were taken from the bands, and were composed of those who seemed to walk in the light of God's countenance. The penitents were those who, for the present, were fallen from grace. After this, the rules of the united societies, and of the bands, were read. The rules of the select societies were the same as those of the bands, with three additions:—1. That nothing spoken in their meetings be spoken again. 2. That every member submit to his minister in all indifferent things. 3. That, till they could have all things common, every member should bring, once a week, all he could spare toward a common stock. The penitents were left without rules. 1744 Age 41

It was agreed, that lay assistants were allowable only in cases of necessity. They were to expound every morning and evening; to meet the united societies, the bands, the select societies, and the penitents, once a week; to visit the classes once a quarter; to hear and decide all differences; to put the disorderly back on trial, and to receive on trial for the bands or society; to see that the stewards, the leaders, schoolmasters, and housekeepers faithfully discharged their several offices; and to meet the leaders and the stewards weekly, and to examine their accounts. They were to be serious; to converse sparingly and cautiously with women; to take no step towards marriage without first acquainting Wesley or his brother clergymen; and to do nothing as a *gentleman*, for they had no more to do with this character than with that of a dancing master. They were to be ashamed of nothing but sin; not of fetching wood, or drawing water; not of cleaning their own shoes, or their neighbour's. They were to take no money of any one, and were to contract no debts without Wesley's knowledge; they were not to mend the rules, but keep them; to employ their time as Wesley directed, and to keep journals, as well for Wesley's satisfaction as for profit to themselves.[1]

It was decided, that they should preach most, where those

[1] Minutes (edit. 1862), vol. i.

1744 Age 41 of them who were clergymen could preach in a church; where they could get the greatest number of quiet and willing hearers; and where they had most success. It was agreed, that field preaching had been used too sparingly; that every alternate meeting of the society, in every place, should be strictly private; and that at the other meeting strangers might be admitted with caution, but not the same person above twice or thrice. To improve the usefulness of classleaders, it was resolved that each leader should be diligently examined, concerning his method of meeting a class; that all of them should converse with the preachers, as frequently and as freely as possible; that they should attend the leaders' meeting every week, bringing notes of all sick persons in their classes; and that none should speak in the leaders' meeting but the preacher or the steward, unless in answer to a question. The members were to be more closely examined, at the general visitation of the classes; the married men and married women, and the single men and single women were to be met apart once a quarter; and all the members were to be visited at their own houses, at times fixed for such a purpose. Tickets were to be given to none, till they were recommended by a leader with whom they had met three months on trial; and new members were to be admitted into the society only on the Sunday following the quarterly visitation, their names being read on the Sunday night previous. It was agreed also that it was lawful for Methodists to bear arms; and that they might use the law as defendants, and perhaps in some cases as plaintiffs.[1]

Other regulations were adopted, either at this or ensuing conferences, as follows: preachers were to meet the children in every place, and give them suitable exhortations; they were to preach expressly and strongly against sabbath breaking, dram drinking, evil speaking, unprofitable conversation, lightness, gaiety, or expensiveness of apparel, and contracting debts without sufficient care to discharge them; they were to recommend to every society, frequently and earnestly, the books that Wesley published, as preferable to any other; they were to use their best endeavours to extirpate smuggling, and also bribery at elections; they were to speak to any that

[1] Minutes (edit. 1862), vol. i.

desired it, every day after the morning and evening preaching. As often as possible, they were to rise at four o'clock; to spend two or three minutes every hour in earnest prayer; to observe strictly the morning and evening hour of retirement; to rarely employ above an hour at a time in conversation; to use all the means of grace; to keep watchnights once a month; to take a regular catalogue of the societies once a year; to speak freely to each other, and never to part without prayer. They were never to preach more than twice a day, unless on Sundays or extraordinary occasions; to begin and end the service precisely at the time appointed; to always suit their subject to their congregations; to choose the plainest texts possible, and to beware of allegorizing and rambling from their texts. They were to avoid everything awkward or affected, either in phrase, gesture, or pronunciation; to sing no hymns of their own composing; to choose hymns proper for the congregation; not to sing more than five or six verses at a time, and to suit the tune to the nature of the hymns. After preaching, they were recommended to take lemonade, candied orange peel, or a little soft, warm ale; and to avoid late suppers, and egg and wine, as downright poison.[1] 1744 Age 41

Here we find six clergymen and four lay preachers, not elaborating an ecclesiastical structure, but carefully considering the greatest truths of the Christian religion, and investigating the duties of its preachers. Six days were spent in this important work. They desired nothing, said Wesley, but to save their own souls and those that heard them. Their doctrines, so simple and encouraging, were not the popular theology of the age; but they were in the Scriptures, and what every sinner needed. They little thought, that they were constructing a platform which would survive their times, and originating a long series of annual conferences which would become one of the most important institutions in the world; a central power, conveying religious benefits to every quarter of the globe, and serving as a model for framing other similar institutions both at home and abroad. The doctrines agreed upon are still the staple doctrines of the

[1] Minutes, published in 1763, 12mo, pp. 30.

1744 Age 41 Methodist communities, and the elements of Methodist discipline may be found in the minutes of this the first Methodist conference.

Leaving Wesley's first conference, we pass to his last sermon before the university of Oxford.

The day appointed for the sermon was Friday, August 24, the anniversary of St. Bartholomew, and occurred in Oxford race week. The duty came to Wesley by rotation; and had he declined it, he must have paid three guineas for a substitute. We have three accounts of this celebrated sermon. From Charles Wesley we learn, that he and Mr. Piers and Mr. Meriton were present at its delivery; that the audience was a large one, and much increased by the racers; that the congregation gave the utmost attention; that some of the heads of colleges stood during the whole service, and fixed their eyes upon the preacher; and that, after the sermon, the little band of four Methodist clergymen walked away in form, none daring to join them.[1]

Wesley's own account is as follows:—

"I preached, I suppose the last time, at St. Mary's. Be it so. I am now clear of the blood of these men. I have fully delivered my own soul. The beadle came to me afterwards, and told me the vice-chancellor had sent him for my notes. I sent them without delay, not without admiring the wise providence of God. Perhaps few men of note would have given a sermon of mine the reading, if I had put it into their hands; but, by this means, it came to be read, probably more than once, by every man of eminence in the university."[2]

"I am well pleased that the sermon was preached on the very day on which, in the last century, near two thousand burning and shining lights were put out at one stroke. Yet what a wide difference is there between their case and mine! They were turned out of house and home, and all that they had; whereas I am only hindered from preaching, without any other loss; and that in a kind of honourable manner; it being determined that, when my next turn to preach came, they would pay another person to preach for me; and so they did, twice or thrice, even to the time that I resigned my fellowship."[3]

The third account is by the celebrated Dr. Kennicott, who was, at this period, in the twenty-fifth year of his age, and an undergraduate of Wadham College. He had no sympathy

[1] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. i., p. 380.
[2] Wesley's Works, vol. i., p. 443. [3] Ibid. vol. xiii., p. 299.

with the Methodists, and yet he appears to have been deeply impressed with Wesley's sermon. He writes :— 1744 Age 41

"All that are masters of arts, and on the foundation of any college, are set down in a roll, as they take their degree ; and, in that order, preach before the university, or pay three guineas for a preacher in their stead ; and as no clergyman can avoid his turn, so the university can refuse none ; otherwise Mr. Wesley would not have preached. He came to Oxford some time before, and preached frequently every day in courts, public houses, and elsewhere. On Friday morning, having held forth twice in private, at five and at eight, he came to St. Mary's at ten o'clock. There were present the vice-chancellor, the proctors, most of the heads of houses, a vast number of gownsmen, and a multitude of private people, with many of Wesley's own people, both brethren and sisters. He is neither tall nor fat ; for the latter would ill become a Methodist. His black hair, quite smooth, and parted very exactly, added to a peculiar composure in his countenance, showed him to be an uncommon man. His prayer was soft, short, and conformable to the rules of the university. His text was Acts iv. 31. He spoke it very slowly, and with an agreeable emphasis." [Here follows a description of the sermon.] "When he came to what he called his plain, practical conclusion, he fired his address with so much zeal and unbounded satire as quite spoiled what otherwise might have been turned to great advantage; for, as I liked some, so I disliked other parts of his discourse extremely. I liked some of his freedom, such as calling the generality of young gownsmen 'a generation of triflers,' and many other just invectives. But, considering how many shining lights are here, that are the glory of the Christian cause, his sacred censure was much too flaming and strong, and his charity much too weak in not making large allowances. But, so far from allowances, he concluded, with a lifted up eye, in this most solemn form, 'It is time for Thee, Lord, to lay to Thine hand ;' words full of such presumption and seeming imprecation, that they gave an universal shock. This, and the assertion that Oxford was not a Christian city, and this country not a Christian nation, were the most offensive parts of the sermon, except when he accused the whole body (and confessed himself to be one of the number) of the sin of perjury ; and for this reason, because, upon becoming members of a college, every person takes an oath to observe the statutes of the university, and no one observes them in all things. Had these things been omitted, and his censures moderated, I think his discourse, as to style, and delivery, would have been uncommonly pleasing to others as well as to myself. He is allowed to be a man of great parts, and that by the excellent Dean of Christ Church (Dr. Conybeare); for the day he preached, the dean generously said of him, 'John Wesley will always be thought a man of sound sense, though an enthusiast.' However, the vice-chancellor sent for the sermon, and I hear the heads of colleges intend to show their resentment."[1]

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1866, p. 44.

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This obnoxious sermon was published a few weeks after it was preached, and was advertised in the October magazines, price sixpence.[1] Another edition was issued in the same year, at Newcastle on Tyne, 12mo, eighteen pages.

In a preface to the reader, Wesley says, that he never intended to print the latter part of the sermon; but "the false and scurrilous accounts of it which had been published, almost in every corner of the nation, now constrained him to publish the whole, just as it was preached, that men of reason might judge for themselves."

The sermon has three divisions, and considers Christianity under three distinct aspects,—(1) As beginning to exist in individuals. (2) As spreading from one to another. (3) As covering the earth. Of these nothing need be said. That which gave offence was the "plain, practical application," which is quite one third of the entire discourse. The following extracts will show what it was that gave the offence which Oxford authorities never pardoned; and also the fidelity and Christian courage of the preacher in uttering such sentiments before such a congregation.

"I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, if ye do account *me* a madman or a fool, yet *as a fool bear with me.* It is utterly needful, that some one should use great plainness of speech towards you. It is more especially needful at *this* time; for who knoweth but it is the *last?* And who will use this plainness, if I do not? Therefore I, even I, will speak. And I adjure you, by the living God, that ye steel not your hearts against receiving a blessing at *my* hands.

"Let me ask you then, in tender love, and in the spirit of meekness, Is this city a *Christian* city? Is *Christianity, scriptural Christianity*, found here? Are we, considered as a community of men, so filled with the Holy Ghost as to enjoy in our hearts, and show forth in our lives, the genuine fruits of that Spirit? Are all the magistrates, all heads and governors of colleges and halls, and their respective societies, (not to speak of the inhabitants of the town,) of one heart and soul? Is the love of God shed abroad in our hearts? Are our tempers the same that were in Christ? And are our lives agreeable thereto?

"In the fear, and in the presence of the great God, before whom both you and I shall shortly appear, I pray you that are in authority over us, whom I reverence for your office sake, to consider, Are you filled with the Holy Ghost? Are ye lively portraitures of Him whom ye are

[1] *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1744, p. 568.

appointed to represent among men? Ye magistrates and rulers, are all the thoughts of your hearts, all your tempers and desires, suitable to your high calling? Are all your words like unto those which come out of the mouth of God? Is there in all your actions dignity and love? 1744 Age 41

"Ye venerable men, who are more especially called to form the tender minds of youth, are you filled with the Holy Ghost? with all those fruits of the Spirit, which your important office so indispensably requires? Do you continually remind those under your care, that the one rational end of all our studies is to know, love, and serve the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent? Do you inculcate upon them, day by day, that without love all learning is but splendid ignorance, pompous folly, vexation of spirit? Has all you teach an actual tendency to the love of God, and of all mankind for His sake? Do you put forth all your strength in the vast work you have undertaken—using every talent which God hath lent you, and that to the uttermost of your power?

"What example is set them" [the youth] "by us who enjoy the beneficence of our forefathers,—by fellows, students, scholars,—more especially those who are of some rank and eminence? Do ye, brethren, abound in the fruits of the Spirit,—in lowliness of mind, in self denial and mortification, in seriousness and composure of spirit, in patience, meekness, sobriety, temperance, and in unwearied, restless endeavours to do good, in every kind, unto all men? Is this the general character of fellows of colleges? I fear it is not. Rather, have not pride and haughtiness of spirit, impatience and peevishness, sloth and indolence, gluttony and sensuality, and even a proverbial uselessness, been objected to us, *perhaps* not always by our enemies, nor *wholly* without ground?

"Many of us are more immediately consecrated to God, called to minister in holy things. Are we then patterns to the rest, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity? From what motives did we enter upon this office? Was it with a single eye to serve God? Have we clearly determined to give ourselves wholly to it? Do we forsake and set aside, as much as in us lies, all worldly cares and studies? Are we apt to teach? Are we taught of God, that we may be able to teach others also? What are the seals of our apostleship? Who, that were dead in trespasses and sins, have been quickened by our word? Have we a burning zeal to save souls from death; so that, for their sake, we often forget even to eat our bread?

"Once more, What shall we say concerning the youth of this place? Have *you* either the form or the power of *Christian* godliness? Are you humble, teachable, advisable? or stubborn, self willed, heady, and high-minded? Are you obedient to your superiors as to parents? Or do you despise those to whom you owe the tenderest reverence? Are you diligent in pursuing your studies with all your strength, crowding as much work into every day as it can contain? Rather, do you not waste day after day, either in reading what has no tendency to Christianity, or in gaming, or in—you know not what? Do you, out of principle, take care to owe no man anything? Do you remember the sabbath day to

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keep it holy? Do you know how to possess your bodies in sanctification and in honour? Are not drunkenness and uncleanness found among you? Yea, are there not of you, who glory in their shame? Do not many of you take the name of God in vain, perhaps habitually, without either remorse or fear? Yea, are there not a multitude of you that are forsworn? Be not surprised, brethren; before God and this congregation, I own myself to have been of that number; solemnly swearing to *observe all those customs*, which I then knew nothing of; and *those statutes*, which I did not so much as read over, either then or for some years after. What is perjury, if this is not?

"May it not be one of the consequences of this, that so many of you are a generation of triflers? triflers with God, with one another, and with your own souls? How few of you spend, from one week to another, a single hour in private prayer? How few have any thought of God in the general tenour of your conversation? Can you bear, unless now and then, in a church, any talk of the Holy Ghost? Would you not take it for granted, if one began such a conversation, that it was either hypocrisy or enthusiasm? In the name of the Lord God almighty, I ask, What religion are you of? Even the talk of *Christianity* ye cannot, will not bear. O my brethren! What a Christian city is this? It is time for Thee, Lord, to lay to Thine hand.

"For indeed, what probability, what possibility is there, that Christianity, scriptural Christianity, should be again the religion of this place? that all orders of men among us should speak and live as men filled with the Holy Ghost? By whom should this Christianity be restored? By those of you that are in authority? Are you desirous it should be restored? And do ye not count your fortune, liberty, life, dear unto yourselves, so ye may be instrumental in restoring it? But suppose ye have this desire, who hath any power proportioned to the effect? Perhaps some of you have made a few faint attempts, but with how small success? Shall Christianity then be restored by young, unknown, inconsiderable men? I know not whether ye yourselves would suffer it. Would not some of you cry out, 'Young man, in so doing thou reproachest us'? But there is no danger of your being put to the proof; so hath iniquity overspread us like a flood. Whom then shall God send? The famine, the pestilence, or the sword, the last messengers of God to a guilty land? The armies of the Romish aliens, to reform us into our first love? Nay, rather, let us fall into Thy hand, O Lord, and let us not fall into the hand of man!"

This is not only the substance, but nearly the whole of the "plain, practical application," that created so much offence. Who can find fault with it? Rather, who will not commend the bold preacher, who, in such yearning accents, gave utterance to truths of the highest consequence, but which perhaps no one but himself, in such a congregation, durst have

uttered? Would to God that pulpits had more of this courageous, pitying fidelity, at the present day! Is it not a fact, that preaching now-a-days consists so much of polite and pious platitudes, that, so far from saving souls, it is almost powerless? The age is too refined to tolerate preachers of the stamp of Luther, Knox, and Wesley. The words of the prophets are, in this pretentiously polite period of the church's history, well worth pondering: "They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace." "This is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord; which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophesy not unto us right things; speak unto us smooth things; prophesy deceits." 1744 Age 41

It was Wesley's fidelity, far more than the novelty of his doctrines and proceedings, that brought upon him the persecutions he encountered. Of these, he and the Methodists had already had their share; but the vials of the people's wrath were far from being emptied. The outrages in Staffordshire and other places have been already mentioned. "In Cornwall," says Wesley, "the war against the Methodists was carried on with far more vigour than that against the Spaniards." "At St. Ives," writes Henry Millard, "the word of God runs and is glorified; but the devil rages horribly." At Camborne, Thomas Westall was pulled down while preaching in Mr. Harris's house; was carried to Penzance, where Dr. Borlase wrote a "mittimus" committing him to the house of correction at Bodmin as a vagrant; and here he was kept till the next quarter sessions, when the justices, then assembled, knowing a little more of the laws of God and man than Dr. Borlase and his Penzance *confrères*, declared his commitment to be illegal, and set him at liberty. "For what pay," asks Wesley, justly proud of his preachers, "could we procure men to do this service,—to be always ready to go to prison or to death?" Dr. Borlase was a man of unquestioned sense and learning; but he was a bigot of the purest water. On his asking Jonathan Reeves to point him out a man who had been the better for hearing the Methodists, Jonathan pointed to John Daniel, then before him. "Get along," cried the doctor. "Get along; you are a

1744 Ag. 41 parcel of mad, crazy headed fellows;" and taking them by the shoulders, he thrust them to the doors. After this, we find him issuing warrants for the apprehension of Methodists; sending Thomas Maxfield to be a soldier; and signing a warrant for the arrest of Wesley himself; yet all this was not sufficient to prevent Wesley rendering to the Cornish bigot his due share of literary praise. "I looked over," writes Wesley, in 1757, "Dr. Borlase's Antiquities of Cornwall. He is a fine writer, and quite master of his subject. He has distinguished, with amazing accuracy, the ancient Saxon monuments from the more ancient Roman, and from those of the Druids, the most ancient of all."[1] The doctor died in 1772.

Dr. Borlase was not alone; for his brother clergymen raged against the Methodists without measure, and, in their sermons, retailed the grossest lies concerning them. A poor woman complained to the mayor of St. Ives of some one throwing a huge stone into her house, which fell on a pillow within a few inches of her suckling child. His worship damned her, and said she might go about her business. One of the clergy told Jonathan Reeves, he wished the Bible were in Latin only, so that none of the common people could read it.[2] The mob at St. Ives saluted Wesley with stones and dirt; and pulled down the meeting-house, "for joy that Admiral Matthews had beat the Spaniards." It was a gratifying fact, however, that, notwithstanding the fierceness of the Cornish persecution, not more than three or four of the Methodists turned cowardly deserters, while the rest, instead of being shaken, were confirmed in their principles by the violence of their enemies.

The press was still vigorously employed. An anonymous pamphlet, entitled "Observations upon the Conduct and Behaviour of a certain Sect usually designated by the name of Methodists," 4to, pages 24, was written by Dr. Gibson, and obtained considerable approval from his brother bishops.[3] In this prelatical publication, the Methodists are charged with

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. ii., p. 404.
[2] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. i.
[3] Whitefield's Works, vol. iv., p. 125.

setting government at defiance, by appointing public places of religious worship, and by preaching in the open air, without taking the prescribed oaths, and subscribing the declaration against Popery. They broke the rules of the church of which they professed themselves members, by going to other than their own parish churches to receive the sacrament. Their doctrines and practices were a dis-service to religion—1. Because they set the standard of religion so high, that some were led to disregard religion altogether. 2. Because they carried the doctrine of justification by faith alone to such a height, as not to allow that the observance of moral duties is a condition of being justified. 3. Because a due attendance on the public offices of religion answered the purposes of devotion better than the "sudden agonies, roarings, screamings, tremblings, ravings, and madness of the Methodists." 4. Because their exalted strains of religion led to spiritual pride, and to contempt of their superiors. In short, the irregular practices of the Methodists were of the like nature as those which had so great a share in bringing in the religious confusions of the last century. 1744 Age 41

Whitefield replied to this pamphlet in two small quarto tracts, of fourteen and twenty-four pages respectively. This evoked "A Serious and Expostulatory Letter," by the Rev. Thomas Church, M.A., vicar of Battersea, and prebendary of St. Paul's;[1] and also another letter, of fifty pages, "by a Gentleman of Pembroke College, Oxford." In the latter production, the Methodists are censured for "suffering their heated imaginations to mount to such an exalted pitch, that it hurries them out of their senses, evaporates the religious spirit, and leaves nothing but sensuality in the heated machine." Whitefield's answer to "Observations on the Conduct and Behaviour of the Methodists" is politely said to be "stuffed with the coaxing and wheedling of the *woman*, the daring of the *rebel*, the pertness of the *coxcomb*, the evasions of the *jesuit*, and the bitterness of the *bigot*." It is unblushingly affirmed, that the Methodists "can curse, rail, and *berogue* their antagonists, though in Scripture language, so as hardly to be exceeded by any pope, or *spiritual bully*, that

[1] *London Magazine*, 1744, p. 260.

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ever yet appeared in Christendom." They are a "rag-tag mob," using "lascivious and blasphemously languishing expressions when they talk of the Redeemer's love." "They cant and blaspheme the Holy Spirit, and appeal to starts and sallies of flesh and blood for the inspiration of the Holy One." They are "a set of creatures of the lowest rank, most of them illiterate, and of desperate fortunes; cursing, reviling, and showing their teeth at every one that does not approve of their frenzy and extravagance." Whitefield was "crafty and malicious enough to be suspected of any wicked enterprise,—a person of wicked principles, travelling over all counties, to establish newfangled societies"; and he and his friends were "heads and spiritual directors of hot-brained cobblers, all big with venom against the clergy of the Established Church." The author "trembles and shudders," lest the Methodists should be "betrayed, by their feelings and stretchings, into a bed of eternal fire and brimstone, appointed for the reception of the lewd, the concupiscent, and the blasphemous."

These are fair specimens of the foul foamings of this valiant defender of Church and state.

Another pamphlet, published in 1744, was "A Charge against Enthusiasm," delivered, in several parts of his diocese, by the Bishop of Lichfield; and the object of which was to prove that "the indwelling and inward witnessing of the Spirit in believers' hearts, as also praying and preaching by the Spirit, are all the *extraordinary gifts* and operations of the Holy Ghost, belonging only to the apostolical and primitive times, and that, consequently, all pretensions to such favours in these last days are vain and enthusiastical."

Another, published at a shilling, was "Remarks on Mr. J. Wesley's last Journal, by Thomas Church, A.M.,"[1] the prebendary of St. Paul's already mentioned. Mr. Church sums up his charges against Wesley thus: "It is impossible for you to put an entire stop to the enormities of the Moravians, while you still (1) too much commend these men; (2) hold principles in common with them, from which these enormities naturally follow; and, (3) maintain other errors more than

[1] *London Magazine*, 1724, p. 624.

theirs, and are guilty of enthusiasm to the highest degree." Mr. Church's "Remarks," however, will have to be noticed in the next chapter. 1744 Age 41

In addition to all this foam and fury against the Methodists, must be mentioned an equally vile attack of another kind. At the Brecon assizes, held in the month of August, the grand jury deemed it their duty to make a presentment to the presiding judge to the following effect: "that the Methodists held illegal meetings," and that their "preachers pretended to expound the Scriptures by virtue of inspiration"; that, by this means, "they collected together great numbers of disorderly persons, very much endangering the peace of our sovereign lord the king; and that, unless their proceedings were timely suppressed, they might endanger the peace of the kingdom in general." At all events, "the pretended preachers, or teachers, at their irregular meetings, by their enthusiastic doctrines, very much confounded and disordered the minds of his majesty's good subjects"; and this, "in time, might lead to the overthrowing of our good government, both in Church and state." Finally, the judge is requested, if the authority of the present court was not sufficient for the purpose, to apply to some superior authority, in order to put an end to the "villainous scheme" of "such dangerous assemblies."[1]

Thus had Methodism to make its way through the opposition of vulgar mobs, fiery priests, lampooning pamphleteers, unjust magistrates, and grand juries. Gamaliel's advice was set aside: "Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God."

Wesley's longest journey, in 1744, was from London to Cornwall, thence to Newcastle, and thence to London. Nearly three months were spent upon this evangelistic tour: many hundreds of miles were traversed, not by rail, or even in stage coaches, but on horseback, over the most miserable roads, the rider sometimes battered with rain and hail for hours together, and at others plunging through drifts of snow

[1] *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1744, p. 504.

1744 Age 41 enough to engulf both man and beast. About a hundred sermons were preached: some, at Gwennap and at St. Stithian, to thousands upon thousands of attentive hearers; some in public houses; some on village greens; and a few in parish churches.

One of the churches Wesley was permitted to occupy was at Laneast, in Cornwall, of which Mr. Bennett was the aged clergyman. Another was at Landau, in Wales. "Such a church," says Wesley, "I never saw before. There was not a glass window belonging to it; but only boards, with holes bored here and there, through which a dim light glimmered. Yet even here the light of God's countenance has shone on many hearts." In the former of these churches a strange scene was witnessed in the month of August. Charles Wesley was preaching "against harmless diversions," having three clergymen, Messrs. Meriton, Thompson, and Bennett, among his auditors. "By harmless diversions," exclaimed the preacher, "I was kept asleep in the devil's arms, secure in a state of damnation, for eighteen years." No sooner were the words uttered than Meriton added aloud, "And I for twenty-five!" "And I," cried Thompson, "for thirty-five!" "And I," said Bennett, the venerable minister of the church, "and I for above seventy."

Strange and stirring incidents came across Wesley's path. In his father's church, at Epworth, he heard Mr. Romley preach two of the bitterest and falsest sermons he ever listened to. On proceeding to Syke House, some of his friends met him and said a drunken mob was awaiting his arrival, who would press all the men in the congregation for soldiers. Others declared, the mob was just about to fire the meeting-house, or pull it to the ground. Wesley calmly answered, "Our only way is to make the best use of it while standing;" and, accordingly, he entered it at once, and expounded the tenth chapter of Matthew. At Durham, he met John Nelson and Thomas Beard, at that time with their regiment, and took them to his inn, and said, "Brother Nelson, lose no time; speak and spare not, for God has work for you to do in every place where your lot is cast; and when you have fulfilled His good pleasure, He will burst your bonds asunder, and we shall rejoice

together."[1] At Chinley, in Derbyshire, lived a poor widow, of the name of Godhard, with a family of four small children. At her request, Wesley made Chinley a resting place, and preached. Finding the widow's house too small, he stood upon a chair near to a miller's dam. The miller, enraged at Wesley and his congregation daring to worship in such proximity to his premises, let off the water for the purpose of drowning Wesley's voice. The effort was a failure; truth triumphed; Chinley became a Methodist preaching place; and, in order to provide the preachers when they called with a cup of tea, the poor widow and her children set apart the whole of every Friday night for winding bobbins, depositing the earnings, as a sacred treasure, in an old pint mug, and never touching them except to meet the necessities of Wesley's itinerants when paying their gospel visits.[2] 1744 Age 41

Already Wesley's lay preachers had become a considerable host. In different parts of the kingdom there were, at least, forty of these devoted evangelists.[3] Some of them, as John Brown, of Newcastle, David Taylor, John Downes, John Nelson, William Shepherd, John Slocomb, Thomas Westall, Thomas Beard, John Haime, Thomas Richards, John Bennet, and Thomas Maxfield, have been already mentioned. Besides these, there were—John Haughton, originally a weaver, who, whilst the mob, in the city of Cork, were burning Wesley in effigy, threw up the window and began to preach to the people in the street; and who, afterwards, obtained episcopal ordination and settled in the sister country;—Jonathan Reeves, who was with Wesley when he laid the first stone of the Orphan House at Newcastle, and who, after passing through a great amount of persecution, became an ordained minister of the Church of England, preached in London, and died in 1778, testifying that all his hope was in Christ Jesus;—Enoch Williams, pious, deeply devoted to his work, faithful and successful, and brought to an untimely grave in 1744;—Thomas Williams, extremely popular as a preacher; but haughty, revengeful, headstrong, and unmanageable; a great

[1] Nelson's Journal. [2] Manuscripts.
[3] See Myles's History.

1744 Age 41 favourite among the London young ladies; but a maligner of the two Wesleys; expelled in 1744, but taken back on declaring, before many witnesses, that the slanders he had propagated against Wesley and his brother were grossly false; the man who introduced Methodism into Ireland in 1747, but who was again expelled from the Methodist society in 1755; and then, through the Countess of Huntingdon, obtained episcopal ordination, and for several years acted as a clergyman in the neighbourhood of High Wycombe;—Thomas Mevrick, a native of Cornwall, educated for the law, a poet, but expelled from the Methodist connexion in 1750, after which he became a clergyman of the Established Church, and died, we fear, a drunkard, at Halifax, in 1770;—John Trembath, one of Wesley's most courageous preachers, though somewhat vain and stubborn; then a farmer and a fibber; and, for a long series of years, an impoverished vagabond, who died about 1794;—Alexander Coates, a poor Scotch "laddie," fond of books, who could speak in Gaelic, read with fluency in Dutch and Danish, and had some acquaintance with Hebrew, Greek, and Latin; the honoured instrument in the conversion of Mr. Crosse, the well known Bradford vicar; one of the best of men, and a most useful preacher, who died, at Newcastle, in 1765, in perfect peace;—William Darney, another Scotchman, honest, bold, impetuous, a rhymer, and painfully eccentric, but who was used by Providence in converting Grimshaw, and who prided himself upon never "*dabbing* people with untempered mortar";—Nicholas Gilbert, a man of deep piety, and of great simplicity, possessed of considerable talents, and pronounced by Wesley "an excellent preacher";—Samuel Larwood, who in 1754 became a Dissenting minister in the borough of Southwark;—James Jones, one of the first fruits of Wesley's ministry in Staffordshire, as bold as a lion, and who built, at his own expense, the first Methodist chapel at Tipton Green;—Joseph Jones, who left the itinerancy in 1760, became a farmer in the county of Somerset, and acted as a local preacher to the end of life;—Herbert Jenkins, who afterwards became one of Whitefield's preachers, and laboured in the Tabernacle connexion;—John Maddern, a man of genuine piety, and a lively, zealous preacher;—Henry Millard, who, after narrowly escaping a violent death at the hands

of a Cornish mob, fell a victim to an attack of small pox, in 1746;—William Prior, of whom Charles Wesley, in a manuscript letter now before us, dated 1755, writes: "William Prior is ordained, without learning, interest, or aught but Providence to recommend him";—Robert Swindells, a man of great benevolence, who was never heard to speak an unkind word of any one, had no enemy, and died full of days, riches, and honour in 1783;—James Wheatley, of Norwich notoriety, where he was often dragged by the hair of his head through the streets of the city, built a large chapel, and became immensely popular, but who ultimately died, beneath a cloud, in Bristol;—Francis Walker, a native of Tewkesbury, pious, honest, and upright, his talents small, but his preaching lively, zealous, and useful, an instrument of great good to souls wherever he went, and who settled in the city of Gloucester, where he died in peace. And to all these must be added William Biggs, Thomas Crouch, John Hall, Thomas Hardwick, Francis Scott, David Tratham, Thomas Willes, and William Holmes. 1744 Age 41

Little more remains to be related concerning the year 1744. The Newcastle society was increasingly earnest, there hardly being a trifler left. The society at Bristol was not so perfect as it should have been, many of the members crying out, "Faith, faith! Believe, believe!" but making little account of the fruits of faith, either of holiness or good works. The London society was poor, but generous. At a single collection, in the month of February, they contributed nearly fifty pounds to relieve the destitute around them, and which Wesley at once laid out in buying clothes for those whom he knew to be diligent and yet in want. A month later, they made a second collection of about thirty pounds. A month later still, a third collection of about six-and-twenty pounds; and to these three collections were added ninety pounds more in the shape of private subscriptions; making altogether £196 raised by the poor London Methodists, and employed in providing clothing for three hundred and sixty persons.

Already some of Wesley's people began to profess Christian perfection; but he was extremely cautious in receiving their testimony. At the end of the year, he writes:—

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"I was with two persons who believe they are saved from all sin. Be it so, or not, why should we not rejoice in the work of God, so far as it is unquestionably wrought in them? For instance, I ask John C——, 'Do you always pray? Do you rejoice in God every moment? Do you in everything give thanks? In loss? In pain? In sickness, weariness, disappointments? Do you desire nothing? Do you fear nothing? Do you feel the love of God continually in your heart? Have you a witness in whatever you speak or do, that it is pleasing to God?' If he can solemnly and deliberately answer in the affirmative, why do I not rejoice and praise God on his behalf? Perhaps, because I have an exceeding complex idea of sanctification, or a sanctified man. And so, for fear he should not have attained all I include in that idea, I cannot rejoice in what he has attained."

This is significant language. Wesley preached the doctrine; but he was slow to believe those who professed to experience it; and it is a fact more remarkable, that, so far as there is evidence to show, Wesley never, to the day of his death, professed as much as this himself. Hundreds, if not thousands, of his followers did; perhaps he himself was restrained from doing so, by a dislike to high profession, or by a conscientious fear, that he hardly reached the standard above set up.

The thing occasioned him great anxiety. A short time before his death, he wrote as follows:—

"Four or five and forty years ago, I had no distinct views of what the apostle meant by exhorting us to 'leave the principles of the doctrine of Christ, and go on to perfection;' but two or three persons in London, whom I knew to be truly sincere, desired to give me an account of their experience. It appeared exceeding strange, being different from any that I had heard before. The next year, two or three more persons at Bristol, and two or three at Kingswood, coming to me severally, gave me exactly the same account of their experience. A few years after, I desired all those in London who made the same profession, to come to me all together at the Foundery, that I might be thoroughly satisfied. I desired that man of God, Thomas Walsh, to give us the meeting there. When we met, first one of us, and then another, asked them the most searching questions we could devise. They answered every one without hesitation, and with the utmost simplicity, so that we were fully persuaded, they did not deceive themselves. In the years 1759 to 1762 their numbers multiplied exceedingly, not only in London and Bristol, but in various parts of Ireland as well as England. Not trusting to the testimony of others, I carefully examined most of these myself; and, in London alone, I found 652 members of our society who were exceeding clear in their experience, and of whose testimony I could see no reason to doubt. I believe no year has passed since that time, wherein God has not wrought the same work in many others; and every one of these

(without a single exception) has declared, that his deliverance from sin was *instantaneous*; that the change was wrought in a moment. Had half of these, or one third, or one in twenty, declared it was *gradually* wrought in *them*, I should have believed this, with regard to *them*, and thought that *some* were gradually sanctified and some instantaneously. But as I have not found, in so long a space of time, a single person speaking thus, I cannot but believe, that sanctification is commonly, if not always, an *instantaneous* work."[1] 1744 Age 41

This is a subject of vast importance, and will often recur in future pages. Meanwhile, all will give Wesley credit for the utmost sincerity, though some may doubt whether human experience is, in itself, sufficient to settle and decide Christian doctrine.

Wesley's pen was, if possible, more busily employed than ever; not so much in composing original productions, as in abridging and revising the works of others. During the year 1744, he published the following :—

1. The sermon preached before the Oxford university on August 24.

2. An Extract from his Journal, from November 1, 1739, to September 3, 1741. With prefatory Letter to the Moravian Church, dated June 24, 1744; and two hymns annexed, on "The Means of Grace," and "The Bloody Issue," both having reference to the Moravian controversy.

3. The Rules of the Band Societies. These, as we have already seen, were read at the conference held in June. During the year, they were published in the form following :—"The Nature, Design, and General Rules of the United Societies, in London, Bristol, Kingswood, and Newcastle upon Tyne. The fourth edition. To which are subjoined the Rules of the Band Societies. London : printed by William Strahan. 1744." 12mo, twelve pages. The *Rules* of the band societies were the same as those which Wesley had drawn up for the Moravian bands, in 1738. The band society members were composed, as previously stated, of persons who professed to have obtained the forgiveness of sins. They were middle class Methodists; that is, in a more advanced state than the members of the "United Societies," but not so advanced as the "Select Societies." The questions to be proposed to

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. vi., p. 464.

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every one before he was admitted were to the following effect: 1. Have you forgiveness of sins? 2. Peace with God? 3. The witness of the Spirit? 4. Is the love of God shed abroad in your heart? 5. Has no sin dominion over you? 6. Do you desire to be told of your faults? 7. Do you desire we should tell you whatsoever we think, fear, or hear concerning you? 8. Is it your desire and design, on this and all other occasions, to speak everything that is in your heart, without exception, without disguise, and without reserve?

The propriety of such questions will be doubted, and especially of other five which had to be proposed at every meeting, and which have been given in a previous chapter. (See page 210.) It would have been no loss to Methodism or to the religious world, if these queries, first drawn up by Wesley on Christmas day, 1738, had been allowed to slumber in the shades of Moravian oblivion. At present, they are never used; and though, in the first instance, they might be adapted to the Moravian brotherhood, they are far too inquisitorial for Methodists.

The bands had to meet once a week; and were bound to observe the following "Directions":—

I. To abstain from evil, especially buying or selling on the sabbath; tasting spirituous liquors; pawning; backbiting; wearing needless ornaments, as rings, earrings, necklaces, lace, and ruffles; and taking snuff or tobacco.

II. To maintain good works,—especially almsgiving; reproving sin; together with diligence, frugality, and self denial.

III. To use all the ordinances of God; especially service at church, and sacrament once a week; likewise every public meeting of the bands; the ministry of the word every morning; private prayer every day; reading the Scriptures at every vacant hour; and observing all Fridays in the year as days of fasting or abstinence.

4. Another of Wesley's publications, in 1744, was "Modern Christianity exemplified at Wednesbury, and other adjacent places in Staffordshire." 12mo, twenty-eight pages. The substance of this pamphlet has been already given in the account of the Staffordshire riots; but the prayer at the end

of it is too remarkable to be passed without notice. The following is an extract :— 1744 Age 41

"Lo, I come, if this soul and body may be useful to anything, to do Thy will, O God. If it please Thee to use the power Thou hast over dust and ashes, here they are to suffer Thy good pleasure. If Thou pleasest to visit me either with pain or dishonour, I will humble myself under it, and, through Thy grace, be obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Hereafter no man can take away anything from me, no life, no honour, no estate; since I am ready to lay them down, as soon as I perceive Thou requirest them at my hands. Nevertheless, O Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from me; but if not, Thy will be done."

What was the spirit of the ancient martyrs if this was not?

5. A fifth publication, "Hymns for Times of Trouble and Persecution" (12mo, forty-seven pages), was issued in the names of "John and Charles Wesley" unitedly. It contains thirteen hymns for times of trouble; sixteen for times of persecution; and four to be sung in a tumult.

The remainder of Wesley's publications, during the present year, were collections or abridgments of the works of other authors, namely :—

1. "A Collection of Moral and Sacred Poems from the most celebrated English authors." Three volumes, 1024 pages, in 12mo. The work is dedicated to "the right honourable the Countess of Huntingdon." Wesley truly observes, that there is nothing in the collection "contrary to virtue; nothing that can in any way offend the chastest ear, or give pain to the tenderest heart. Whatever is really essential to the most sublime divinity, as well as the purest and most refined morality, will be found therein. The most just and important sentiments are here represented with all the ornaments both of wit and language, and in the clearest, fullest, strongest light."

"There is," writes Mr. Marriott,[1] "a circumstance little known regarding this 'Collection.' A few months after the publication of these volumes, Dodsley (the publisher) called upon Wesley for reparation of a piracy, which the latter had unwittingly committed, and for which he agreed to pay him £50." This was done on February 8, 1745, by payment of a £20 bank note, and a cheque for £30, payable in three months.

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1848, p. 976

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2. "A Brief Account of the occasion, process, and issue of a late Trial at the Assize held at Gloucester, 3rd March, 1743. Between some of the people called Methodists, Plaintiffs, and certain Persons of Minchinhampton, in the said county, Defendants. Extracted from Mr. Whitefield's Letter. By John Wesley." Twelve pages, 12mo.

This was a sort of companion tract to "Modern Christianity at Wednesbury." Appended is "a prayer for his majesty King George," in ten verses of four lines each, which, in a somewhat altered form, is now the 465th hymn in the Methodist Hymn-Book.

3. "A Collection of Prayers for Families." 12mo, 24 pages.

Wesley considered family religion as indispensable to the preservation and extension of the work of God. Some of the first Methodists neglected it; and, as a consequence, their children shook off all religion and abandoned themselves to wickedness.[1] "Family religion," said Wesley, twenty years after this, "is the grand desideratum among the Methodists."[2]

To promote this, Wesley published his "Prayers for Families," in 1744. The prayers are only fourteen in number; that is, a prayer for every morning and every evening during a single week; but anything more devout, scriptural, appropriate, and religiously rich it would be difficult to conceive.

4. "The Case of John Nelson, written by himself. Published by John Wesley." 12mo, 36 pages.

5. "An Extract of Count Zinzendorf's Discourses on the Redemption of Man by the Death of Christ." 12mo, 78 pages.

These loosely worded "Discourses," sixteen in number, were first published in 1740, in 12mo, two hundred and two pages. They were all founded upon Luther's explanation of the second article of the Apostles' creed; "I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son our Lord."

6. "A Serious Call to a Holy Life. Extracted from a late author." 12mo, 230 pages. This was an abridgment of the

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. vii., p. 72. [2] Ibid. vol. iii., p. 257.

well known work of William Law, and was printed by John Gooding, of Newcastle upon Tyne. It consists of nineteen chapters, dwelling on Christian devotion; the duties of all orders and ranks of men and women, of all ages, to practise it; the happiness arising from doing so; and recommendations in reference to it. 1744 Age 41

It is impossible to give the reader, by any brief description here, an adequate idea of this powerful and pungent book. He must read it for himself. When will the young people of the present day, imbibing the froth of sensational writing, learn that books, like wine, are none the worse for being old?

7. "The Life of God in the Soul of Man; or, the Nature and Excellency of the Christian Religion." 12mo, forty-eight pages.

This was an extract from an excellent treatise, written by the Rev. Henry Scougal, a Scottish minister, who died at the early age of twenty-eight, in the year 1678. The book breathes the sublimest piety; and, in style, is pure and elegant.

8. "The Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God. Extracted from Mr. Edwards, minister of Northampton, in New England." 12mo, 48 pages.

By publishing this calm, pointed, argumentative treatise, Wesley made its sentiments his own; and, from it, the reader may easily infer what were Wesley's opinions respecting the religious revival with which he and his contemporaries were connected. (See page 218.) The following is a synopsis of the answers to objections.

It is no sign, that a work is not Divine, because it is carried on in a way unusual and extraordinary. The Spirit is sovereign in His operations. We ought not to limit God where He has not limited Himself. Neither is a work to be judged by any effects on the bodies of men; such as tears, trembling, groans, loud outcries, agonies, or faintings; for there is reason to believe, that great outpourings of the Spirit, both in the prophetic and apostolic ages, were not wholly without these extraordinary effects. The same is true respecting religious commotion among the people, for this is the natural result of such a work. Further, though many of the converts may be guilty of great imprudences and irre-

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gularities, neither is this a sign that the work is not the work of God; for, in a mixed multitude of wise and unwise, young and old, all under powerful impressions, no wonder that some should behave themselves imprudently. It was thus in the apostolic churches, and this is not unlikely to continue while weakness is one of the elements of human nature. There may be errors in judgment, and some delusions of Satan intermixed with the revival; but that is not conclusive evidence, that the work in general is not the work of the Holy Ghost. Some may fall away into scandalous practices; but, if we look into church history, we shall find no instance of a great revival of religion but what has been attended with such relapses. The work may have been promoted by ministers strongly preaching the terrors of the law; but what of that? If there really be a hell of dreadful and never ending torments, ought not those exposed to it to be earnestly warned of their fearful danger? For ministers to preach of hell, and warn sinners to avoid it in a cold, careless, hesitating manner, is to contradict themselves, and to defeat their own purposes. The manner in which the thing is said is, in such a case, more effectual than the words employed. It may be unreasonable to think of frightening a man to heaven; but it is not unreasonable to endeavour to frighten him away from hell.

Such, in substance, were the sentiments to which Wesley affixed his *imprimatur* in 1744,—sentiments still worth pondering, because always true.

Great revivals may be, often are, and perhaps must be, attended with circumstances which enlightened and sober minded Christians dislike; but rather than be without revivals, where is the man who loves Christ and the souls of sinners, who would not gladly crucify his own dislikes?

Twelve months after this, in the year 1745, Wesley, appealing to men of reason and religion, who were in doubt, whether the revival then vouchsafed was the work of God, observed:—"You have all the proof of this you can reasonably expect or desire. That, in many places, abundance of notorious sinners are totally reformed, is declared by a thousand eye and ear witnesses both of their present and past behaviour. What would you have more? What pretence

can you have for doubting any longer? Do you delay fixing your judgment till you see a work of God, without any stumbling block attending it? That never was yet, nor ever will. 'It must needs be that offences will come.' And scarce ever was there such a work of God before, with so few as have attended this."[1] 1744 Age 41

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. viii., p. 233.

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WHITEFIELD, during the whole of the year 1745, was in America. Charles Wesley spent about thirty-eight weeks in London; and about fourteen in Bristol, Wales, and the west of England. Wesley himself was nearly five months in London and its vicinity; about a month in Bristol and the neighbourhood; two months were spent in a tour to Cornwall; and four months in two journeys to Newcastle and the north of England.

Persecution somewhat abated, especially in the form of printed attacks and scandals; not because Methodism was less hated, but because the attention of the country was turned to the dangers arising from the invasion of the popish Pretender.

In Cornwall, however, Thomas Maxfield was seized for a soldier, and was put into the dungeon at Penzance. Edward Greenfield, of St. Just, a tanner, with a wife and seven children, was arrested under a warrant signed by Dr. Borlase. Wesley asked what objection there was to this peaceable and inoffensive man. The answer was, "The man is well enough in other things; but the gentlemen cannot bear his impudence. Why, sir, he says he knows his sins are forgiven." This Cornish persecution was principally promoted by men like Borlase and Eustick. The latter came with a warrant for Wesley's arrest; but sneaked away from its execution, like a blustering poltroon. While Wesley was preaching at Gwennap, two men, raging like maniacs, rode into the midst of the congregation, and began to lay hold upon the people. In the midst of the disturbance, Wesley and his friends commenced singing; when Mr. B. lost his patience, and bawled to his attendants, "Seize him, seize him. I say, seize the preacher for his majesty's service." The attendants not moving, he cursed them with the greatest bitterness, leaped off his horse, caught hold of Wesley's cassock, crying, "I take you to serve his majesty." Wesley walked with him

for three quarters of a mile, when the courage of the bumptious bravo failed him, and he was glad to let the poor parson go. The day after this ignoble capture, Wesley was at Falmouth, where the rabble surrounded the house in which he was lodging, and roared, "Bring out the Canorum! Where is the Canorum?" (an unmeaning word which the Cornish generally used instead of Methodist.) They then forced open the outer door, and setting their shoulders to the inner one, cried out, "Avast, lads, avast!" Away went all the hinges; Wesley stepped into the midst of the privateering mob, and asked one after another, "To which of you have I done any wrong? To you? Or you? Or you?" All seemed speechless, until, thus questioning his furious assailants, Wesley found himself in the open street, where he cried to the assembled crowd, "Neighbours, countrymen! Do you desire to hear me speak?" "Yes, yes," they answered vehemently; "he shall speak, he shall; no one shall hinder him!" Meanwhile, Mr. Thomas, the clergyman, and some other gentlemen came up; Wesley was rescued; his horse was sent before him to Penryn; he was despatched by water; and an item of nine shillings and some odd pence appeared in the parochial accounts "for driving the Methodists out of the parish."[1] 1745 Age 42

Wesley's troubles, however, were not ended. His enemies ran along the shore to receive him at his landing. Wesley there confronted them, and, speaking to their leader, said, "I wish you a good night;" to which the wretch replied, "I wish you were in hell," and then turned away with his companions. Wesley mounted his horse, and hurried forward to Tolcarn, where he had to preach the same evening. On the way, five well dressed horsemen were awaiting him, with a special warrant, from the Helstone magistrates, for his arrest. He rode into the midst of them, and announced who he was. A friendly clergyman, Mr. Collins, of Redruth, accidentally came by, and told the gentlemen that he had known Wesley at the Oxford university. Conversation followed, and Wesley was allowed to proceed upon his journey; one of those who had come out for his arrest telling him, that the reason of

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1820, p. 540.

1745 Age 42 all this annoyance was, that all the gentlemen round about affirmed, that, for a long time, he had been in France and Spain; was now sent to England by the Pretender, and was raising societies to join him at his coming.

In the midst of all this, Wesley courageously rode to and fro, preaching from, "Love your enemies;" "Watch and pray;" and, "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." At Tolcarn, while he was preaching, the mob assembled, and suddenly pushed him from the high wall on which he was standing. At Trevonan, just after he had begun his sermon, the constable and others came, and read the proclamation against riots. At Stithians, the churchwardens seized one of his hearers, and pressed him for a soldier.

Whilst these outrages were being perpetrated in Cornwall, Richard Moss was arrested at Epworth for preaching; but was delivered through the interference of Mr. Maw, in whose house he prayed and sang hymns till midnight; and then left for Robert Taylor's, at Burnham, where he and the Epworth Methodists continued praying and praising God, till about four o'clock in the morning. At Betley, near Nantwich, a gentleman threatened to hire a mob to pull down the Methodist meeting-house, and to send all the Methodists for soldiers. At Bristol, a Methodist backslider declared he would "make affidavit that he had seen Wesley administer extreme unction to a woman, and give her a wafer, and say that was her passport to heaven."[1] At Woodley, in Cheshire, John Bennet and three other Methodists were pressed for soldiers, most of the press gang being Dissenters. The reverend Mr. Henry Wickham, one of the magistrates for the west riding of Yorkshire, issued a warrant to the constable of Keighley, "to convey the body of Jonathan Reeves to his majesty's gaol and castle of York;" the only crime of which Jonathan was guilty being that of calling sinners to repentance; though the reverend magistrate chose to describe him as "a spy among us, and a dangerous man to the person and government of his majesty King George."[2] In Exeter, says

[1] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. i., p. 396.
[2] C. Wesley's Life, vol. i., pp. 415, 430.

Paper Slanders

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The London Evening Post, for May 16, 1745, the Methodists had a meeting-house behind the Guildhall; and, on May 6, the mob gathered at the door, and pelted those who entered with potatoes, mud, and dung. On coming out, the congregation were all beaten, without exception; many were trampled under foot; many fled without their hats and wigs; and some without coats, or with half of them torn to tatters. Some of the women were lamed, and others stripped naked, and rolled most indecently in the kennel, their faces being besmeared with lampblack, flour, and dirt. This disgraceful mob consisted of some thousands of cowardly blackguards, and the disturbance was continued till midnight. The same newspaper, in its number issued on May 25, relates, with a sneer, that a Methodist vagrant had been apprehended at Frome; that he was a person of "very ill fame," and was committed to prison; but another of the same sect, "a Scotchman, a travelling apostle," had succeeded him, and was meeting with surprising success. He had already wrought several miracles, one of which was making a deaf old woman hear angels playing on celestial harps in the upper regions; and another was that of converting his own oatmeal into cake, and transforming his water into wine. He also cured distempers of the body as well as of the mind; though he often killed the one with his drugs, to save the other with his doctrine. The *Westminster Journal* for June 8, 1745, narrates that a noted Methodist preacher, named Tolly, had been pressed for a soldier in Staffordshire, and had appeared before the magistrates, attended by many of his "deluded followers of both sexes, who pretended he was a learned and holy man; and yet, it appeared that he was only a journeyman joiner, and had done great mischief among the colliers." The poor luckless joiner was, therefore, coupled to a sturdy tinker, and sent off to Stafford jail. He had already been pressed once before, and the Methodists had subscribed £40 to obtain his freedom, and were intending to repeat the kindness; but the impeccable editor of the *Westminster Journal* hopes that the magistrates will be proof against golden bribes; for "such wretches" as Tolly "are incendiaries in a nation," and greatly to be dreaded.

These were the chief acts of violence committed against

1745 Age 42 the Methodists in 1745. As already stated, the press was still employed, though it was not so bitter as it had been previously. Newspapers and magazines found that news about the Pretender's invasion was more taking with the public than elaborated diatribes against Wesley and his friends. During the year, however, there was published, by a clergyman unknown to fame, an octavo pamphlet of eighty pages, with the title:—"An Apology for the Clergy, in a Letter to a Gentleman of Fortune and great Reading, lately turned Methodist and Hermit; wherein is shown the weakness of those Objections, which Separatists in general pretend first induced them to leave the Established Church, and to look out for better guides somewhere else. By J. Maud, M.A., vicar of St. Neots, in the county of Huntingdon." Mr. Maud alleges, that there is a powerful confederacy against the Church,—"a mixed multitude of Socinians, Presbyterians, Independents, Quakers, Anabaptists, Antinomians, Meer Moralists, Jesuits, Free Thinkers, and Methodists, and an infinite tribe of nameless sects, all hallooed on by the vicar of Jesus Christ and his creatures, to tear Christians to pieces, and to make sport for infidels and atheists." The pamphlet is a spirited defence of the clergy, whom the "Methodist and Hermit" had libelled, and an attempt to show, that it was no trivial matter to be a faultless minister of Christ in an age when it was considered "a rude affront to any polite audience to tell men of their faults, or so much as to mention these harsh and dreadful sounding words, hell, damnation, devil, without a canting paraphrase, or a formal apology."

A second pamphlet, published in 1745, was, "The Question, Whether it be right to turn Methodist, considered in a Dialogue between two members of the Church of England." 8vo, 79 pages. The Methodists are branded as "unskilful teachers, doing great mischief to the peace of the Church, and to the souls of poor, ignorant people; by raising vain janglings about regeneration; by resolving all religion into instantaneous faith, and faith itself into impulses and mere animal sensations; by setting aside all necessity for repentance; and by casting off *all* works, as unnecessary to salvation." The pamphlet is ably written; but is extremely false.

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Another attack on Methodism was one published in the *Craftsman*, of June 22, and copied in the *London Magazine* and other periodicals of the period. It was, in fact, an onslaught upon the government of the day, entitled "Ministerial Methodism, or Methodists in Politics;" but, in castigating ministers of state, it grossly calumniates ministers of Christ. The Methodists are an "unaccountable strange sect, whose religion is founded on madness and folly." They "hold, that there is no justification by good works, but by faith and grace only; and hereby banish that Divine part of our constitution, reason; and cut off the most essential recommendation to heaven, virtue." By this "depraved doctrine" of "weak and, perhaps, designing teachers, misguided souls are dangerously led astray." The "men are far gone in their mad principles of religion, suspend the hand of industry, become inactive, and leave all to Providence, without exercising either their heads or hands."

The article, though neatly written, was supremely silly: Wesley, at the urgent request of his friends, answered it;[1] but the thing was far more contemptible than some other attacks which had been allowed, properly enough, to pass unnoticed.

Another anti-Methodist publication, issued in 1745, was entitled, "An Earnest and Affectionate Address to the People called Methodists." 12mo, 47 pages. This was published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and was distributed gratuitously.[2] Its author, an old antagonist, was the Rev. Dr. Stebbing.[3] Two editions were exhausted in 1745, and a third sent out in 1746. It allows the Methodists to be honest and well meaning; but they are "greatly imposed upon," and "ignorantly serve the designs of enthusiasm, and give credit to the most extravagant and groundless pretences." The writer proceeds, with considerable ability, to examine the Methodist doctrines of regeneration, justification by faith alone, and the operations of the Holy Spirit; and concludes by saying that, though the Methodist teachers at

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. viii., p. 492.
[2] *London Magazine*, 1745, p. 297.
[3] Nichols' Literary Anecdotes, vol. viii., p. 228.

1745 Age 42 first were only distinguished by "a peculiar strictness and regularity, and a decent observance of the rules of the Church, it was not long that they kept within these bounds. Being admired and followed, they became vain and conceited, and proceeded to open censures and contempt of their brethren. They grew loud and furious in their accusations and railings. They made most presumptuous pretences to Divine communications and directions"; and, when "their errors were pointed out, by some of the highest and most considerable of the clergy, with all possible meekness and temper, their answers were saucy and petulant. Fresh bitterness arose; more arrogant boasting; and more uncharitable revilings. They seized a pulpit or two without leave; and, in defiance of the law, exercised their ministry in fields and commons, and other unlicensed places. They set aside and altered the liturgy at their pleasure, and made use of extempore effusions of their own in the public worship of God."

Such were some of the allegations brought against Wesley and his friends at the instance of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

Another pamphlet, published in the same year, was "A Serious Address to Lay-Methodists to beware of the false pretences of their Teachers. With an Appendix containing an account of the fatal and bloody effects of enthusiasm, in the case of the family of the Dutartres in South Carolina, which was attended with the murder of two persons, and the execution of four for those murders. By a Sincere Protestant." 8vo, 29 pages.

This was a frothy composition, asserting that "the Methodist preachers are wandering lights, gadding about with canting assurances, and leading people into bogs of delusion." Its author was Dr. Zachary Grey, already mentioned (page 325) as the author of "The Quakers and Methodists compared."[1]

Besides all these attacks, Wesley had to endure much Moravian annoyance. At the commencement of the year, desiring to see once more his old friend Gambold, he called at James Hutton's, and there met Mr. Simpson, "extremely gay, easy, and unconcerned"; "a new creature indeed! but

[1] Nichols' Literary Anecdotes, vol. ii., p. 541.

not in the gospel sense." Mr. Simpson, unhappily, was a specimen of others. The Moravians meant well; but they held and preached the grand old doctrine of salvation by *faith only*, so unguardedly that, as a matter of course, the rank weed of antinomianism sprung out of the soil of Christian truth. Antinomianism, according to Wesley, was now a torrent; not only in London but out of it. At Bristol, Wesley writes, "the Antinomians had taken true pains to seduce those who were showing their faith by their works; but they reaped little fruit of their bad labour; for, upon the most diligent inquiry, I could not find that seven persons out of seven hundred had been turned out of the old Bible way." Whitefield, writing from America, remarks: "Antinomianism, I find, begins to show its head, and stalk abroad. May the glorious Redeemer cause it to hide its head again; and prevent His children's spirits being embittered against each other."[1] In August, James Hutton, by order of Zinzendorf, published, in the *Daily Advertiser*, an advertisement, declaring that the Moravians had no connection with the two Wesleys; and subjoining one of the count's prophecies, that Wesley and his brother would "soon run their heads against the wall." To this Wesley simply said: "We will not, if we can help it." Dissensions also had sprung up among the Unitas Fratrum themselves. Richard Viney had denounced Zinzendorf's "more than papal domination;" and large numbers of the Yorkshire Moravians had sympathised with him. Zinzendorf was furious, and, in February 1744, wrote from Germany as follows:—

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"I hereby declare, that I will have nothing more to do with those English Brethren, who have been mixed up in Viney's rebellion. I disapprove of the absolution that is given to such Corah spirits. I laugh at the English national self righteousness in matters relating to our salvation. I desire to be erased from the list of English labourers, and not to be named among them, until all accomplices in the late revolt make an acknowledgment in writing of their having been deceived by Satan.

"The well-known little fool and poor sinner,

"LUDWIG."[2]

This was pitiful tomfoolery; the raging of a lilliputian and disappointed pope.

[1] Whitefield's Works, vol. ii., p. 79. [2] Hutton's Memoirs, p. 143.

1745 Age 42 During the year, a 12mo pamphlet, of forty-one pages, was published, with the title, "Extracts of Letters relating to Methodists and Moravians. By a Layman;" in which the Moravians are censured—1. For laying aside the use of their intellectual faculties in *religious matters*. 2. For refusing to take oaths before a magistrate. 3. For declining to take up arms in defence of their country, at the command of the civil power. And, 4. For their praying to and praising so constantly the Son of God, and so very seldom the Father. This was supposed to be written by Sir John Thorold; but as it makes no attack upon Wesley and his immediate followers it need not be farther noticed.

Another, and more important publication, was the following:—"Remarks on the Rev. Mr. John Wesley's last Journal, wherein he gives an account of the tenets and proceedings of the Moravians, especially those in England, and of the divisions and perplexities of the Methodists: showing, by the concessions of Mr. Wesley himself, the many errors relating to faith and practice, which have already arisen among these deluded people; and, in a particular manner, explaining the very fatal tendency of denying good works to be conditions of our justification. In a letter to that gentleman. By Thomas Church, A.M., vicar of Battersea, and prebendary of St. Paul's." 8vo, 76 pages.

The pamphlet is calmly and ably written, and thus concludes: "The consequences of Methodism, which have hitherto appeared, are bad enough to induce you to leave it. It has introduced many disorders—Enthusiasm, Antinomianism, Calvinism, a neglect and contempt of God's ordinances and almost all other duties, a great increase of our sects and divisions, and, in fine, presumption and despair in greater abundance than they were known before."

The letter is dated, November 3, 1744, and has the following postscript:—"If you think proper to return any answer, I hope you will attentively consider the points objected to you, and not put me off with such a slight, superficial, declamatory thing as Mr. Whitefield, without any regard to his own character or the importance of the subject, published last year under the title of an answer to my letter to him; in which he did not vouchsafe to consider any one argument

I had urged against him, and which no serious man could think deserved any notice." 1745 Age 42

The "Remarks" deserved an answer. Wesley acknowledged, in after years, that Church "wrote as a gentleman."[1] "Mr. Church," said he, in 1777, "was another kind of opponent than Mr. Rowland Hill; a gentleman, a scholar, and a Christian; and as such he both spoke and wrote."[2]

Accordingly, first of all, Mr. Webb published a letter in vindication of Wesley's Journal, in reply to Mr. Church;[3] and then Wesley himself issued a 12mo pamphlet of forty-six pages, entitled, "An Answer to the Rev. Mr. Church's Remarks on the Rev. Mr. John Wesley's last Journal."

Wesley thus begins:—"Reverend sir,—My first desire and prayer to God is, that I may live peaceably with all men: my next, that if I must dispute at all, it may be with a man of understanding. Thus far, I rejoice on the present occasion. I rejoice also, that I have confidence of your sincerity, of your real desire to promote the glory of God, by peace and goodwill among men. I am likewise thankful to God for your calm manner of writing (a few paragraphs excepted); and yet more for this,—that such an opponent should, by writing in such a manner, give me an opportunity of explaining myself on those very heads whereon I wanted an occasion so to do."

He then proceeds to say, that he wholly disapproved of the doctrines, "that there are no degrees in faith; that, in order to attain faith, we must abstain from all the ordinances of God; that a believer does not grow in holiness; and that he is not obliged to keep the commandments of God;" but, at the same time, he remarks, that he had already cleared the *Moravian church* from the charge of holding the first of these doctrines; that, with respect to the ordinances of God, their practice was better than their principle; and that he never knew a Moravian, except Molther, who affirmed that a believer does not grow in holiness. "Still," he adds, "I am afraid their whole church is tainted with quietism, universal salvation, and antinomian opinions." "As a church, they

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. ix., p. 62. [2] Ibid. vol. x., p. 433.
[3] Hutton's Memoirs, p. 184.

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exalted themselves above measure, and despised others. He had scarce heard one Moravian brother own his church to be wrong in anything. Many of them he had heard speak of it, as if it were infallible; and some of them had set it up as the judge of all the earth, of all persons as well as doctrines. Some had said, there was no true church but theirs, and that there were no true Christians out of it. These were exceeding great mistakes; yet in as great mistakes holy men had both lived and died;—Thomas à Kempis, for instance, and Francis Sales." He condemns them for "despising and decrying self denial; for their extending Christian liberty beyond all warrant of holy writ; for their want of zeal for good works; and, above all, for their using guile;" but he wishes not to condemn all for the sake of some, and expresses the belief that, next to some thousands in the Church of England, that is mainly the Methodists, the Moravians, with whom he had formed acquaintance, were, upon the whole, the best Christians in the world. They had much evil among them, but more good. They were the most self inconsistent people now existing; and yet he could not help but speak of them with tender affection, were it only for the benefits he had received from them; and, if the stumbling blocks above mentioned were put away, he should desire union with them above all things under heaven.

After this, Wesley gives his latest thoughts upon justification by faith alone, as published in his "Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion," which will be noticed hereafter.

In reply to Church's assertion, that Wesley was guilty of enthusiasm to the highest degree, Wesley remarks, that he is no more like Church's picture of an enthusiast than he is like a centaur. He made the word of God the rule of all his actions, and no more followed any secret impulse instead thereof, than he followed Mahommed or Confucius. He rested not on ecstasies at all, for he never felt them; but judged of his spiritual estate by the improvement of his heart and the tenour of his life conjointly. He desired neither his dreams nor his waking thoughts to be at all regarded, unless just so far as they agreed with the oracles of God.

Before leaving the Moravians, reference must be made to another pamphlet, issued in 1745. "A Short View of the

Difference between the Moravian Brethren lately in England and the Rev. Mr. John and Charles Wesley. Extracted chiefly from a late Journal. London: printed by W. Strahan. Sold at the Foundery, etc. 1745." 12mo, 24 pages. The pamphlet is dated, May 20, 1745, and is signed by both the Wesleys. Appended are six hymns bearing on the subject. The differences are contained in ten propositions; but having been referred to so frequently in the preceding pages, it is scarcely necessary to repeat them here. Suffice it to say, that the publication of these "Differences" was probably owing to the publication of Church's remarks on Wesley's Journal; and, that it was one, if not the main, reason of Zinzendorf and Hutton publishing, in the *Daily Advertiser*, that the Moravians had now no connection with the Wesleys. Wesley, in his pamphlet, uses language more than ordinarily strong. He pronounces several of the Moravian dogmas "utterly false." He declares, that Zinzendorf's definition of faith, namely, the historical knowledge that Christ has been a man and suffered death for us, "is a proposition directly subversive of the whole of the Christian revelation;" and that his doctrine, that "a believer is not holy *in himself*, but in Christ only," is "a palpable self contradiction, and senseless jargon." Zinzendorf's temper was touchy, and it is not surprising, that he resented Wesley's plain speaking, and commanded Hutton to publish the advertisement just mentioned. 1745 Age 41

The controversy still continued; and, during 1745, two other tracts were published by Wesley. (1) "A Dialogue between an Antinomian and his friend." 12mo, 12 pages. (2) "A Second Dialogue between an Antinomian and his friend." 12mo, 12 pages.

In both these tracts, the monstrousness of the Moravian and other errors is mercilessly exposed and censured. "All that is really uncommon in your doctrine," says Wesley to his antinomian friend, "is a heap of broad absurdities, in most of which you grossly contradict yourselves, as well as Scripture and common sense. In the meantime, you boast and vapour, as if *ye were the men, and wisdom should die with you.* I pray God to humble you, and prove you, and show you what is in your heart!"

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This was partly written in answer to a Dialogue that had been published by William Cudworth, who was, for some years, a follower of Whitefield, and then became minister of an Independent congregation, in Margaret Street, London, and died in 1763.[1] The biographer of the Countess of Huntingdon states, that Cudworth "died in the comforts of the doctrines of grace, leaving behind him a character for eminent holiness and integrity."[2] Wesley's description of the man is widely different; but, if Wesley ever felt the least bitterness towards any of his opponents, it was towards Cudworth. He describes him as an Antinomian; an absolute, avowed enemy to the law of God, which he never preached, or professed to preach, but termed all legalists who did. With him, preaching the law was an abomination. He would preach Christ, as he called it, but without one word either of holiness or good works.[3]

Mr. Cudworth will again cross our path. Suffice it to say here, that, between him and Wesley, no love was lost. Affection for him was at zero; and he abhorred Wesley "as much as he did the pope, and ten times more than he did the devil."[4]

As already stated, Wesley made, during 1745, two journeys to Newcastle and the north of England.

The first of these was commenced on the 18th of February, and lasted to the 11th of May. Richard Moss was his companion, and not a few were the adventures with which they met. Locomotion was rendered extremely difficult in consequence of snow. In some places, a thaw, succeeded by a frost, had made the ground like glass; and often they were obliged to walk, it being impossible to ride, their

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[1] Cudworth published two replies to Wesley; one in 1745, entitled, "A Dialogue between a Preacher of inherent righteousness and a Preacher of God's righteousness: being an answer to a late Dialogue between an Antinomian and his friend." 12mo, 12 pages. Another, in 1746, with the title, "Truth defended and cleared from mistakes and misrepresentations." 12mo, 52 pages. In both of these productions, Cudworth shows great ability, and though his opinions, as there expressed, are far from orthodox, yet, unless other facts can be alleged against him, he hardly deserves the hard things which Wesley said of him.

[2] "Life and Times of Countess of Huntingdon," vol. ii., p. 338.

[3] Wesley's Works, vol. viii., p. 335. [4] Ibid. vol. xii., p. 245.

horses frequently falling, even while they were leading them. At Gateshead Fell, the whole country appeared a great pathless waste of white; and, but for an honest man who became their guide, they knew not how to reach Newcastle. Wesley writes:—"Many a rough journey have I had before, but one like this I never had; between wind, and hail, and rain, and ice, and snow, and driving sleet, and piercing cold: but it is past; these days will return no more, and are therefore as though they had never been." This rough journey of two hundred and eighty miles was performed on horseback, in six days, at the rate of nearly fifty miles a day. 1745 Age 42

The besetting sin of the Newcastle Methodists was the being offended with each other; and Wesley's first work was to reconcile wrangling neighbours. On the second Sunday after his arrival, a brutal bully, who had been accustomed to abuse the Orphan House family, and to throw stones at them, assaulted Wesley in Pilgrim Street, and cursed and pushed him. The next day the following characteristic note was sent:—

"ROBERT YOUNG,—I expect to see you between this and Friday, and to hear from you, that you are sensible of your fault; otherwise, in pity to your soul, I shall be obliged to inform the magistrates of your assaulting me yesterday in the street.

"I am, your real friend,

"JOHN WESLEY."

Robert Young immediately came, and meekly begged pardon, and promised to amend his ways.

On the 11th of March, Wesley wrote a long letter to a friend, giving an account of the way in which the Methodist societies had sprung into existence, and then stating succinctly the present position of himself and his coadjutors. They were willing to make any concession, which their conscience would permit, in order to heal the breach between the clergy and themselves; but they could not desist from preaching the doctrine of inward and present salvation, as attainable by faith alone; nor could they promise not to preach in private houses, or in the open air; for, as things were now circumstanced, this would amount to a promise not to preach at all. They could not, with a safe conscience, dissolve their societies,

1745 Age 42 for they apprehended that many souls would be lost thereby; neither could they advise the members one by one, their number rendering this impossible. They could not suffer those who walked disorderly still to mingle with the rest, because evil communications corrupt good manners; nor could they discharge the leaders, because it was through the leaders that disorderly walkers were detected. While they were resolved to behave with reverence towards the bishops of the Church, and with tenderness both to the character and persons of the inferior clergy, they desired not to be admitted to their pulpits, if they believed them to be preachers of false doctrine, or had the least scruple of conscience concerning this; but, at the same time, they desired that those clergymen who believed their doctrines to be true, and had no scruple at all in the matter, should not be either publicly or privately discouraged from inviting them to preach in their churches. If any one thought them heretics or schismatics, and deemed it his duty to preach or print against them, be it so; they had not the least objection; but, before doing so, they desired that he would calmly consider both sides of the question, and not condemn them unheard. If they were guilty of either Popery, sedition, or immorality, they desired no favour; but they also desired, that senseless tales concerning them should not be credited without proof. They desired not any preferment, favour, or recommendation, from authorities either in Church or state; but they asked—1. That, if anything material were laid to their charge, they might be permitted to answer for themselves. 2. That the clergy and magistrates would hinder their dependants from stirring up the rabble against them. And, 3. That they would effectually suppress, and thoroughly discountenance, all riots and popular insurrections, which evidently strike at the foundation of all government, whether of Church or state.

Such was Wesley's position in 1745. Though the document was not published in his Journal for eight years afterwards, it was, in fact, a manifesto defining his relations to Church and state, and the course of action he felt it his duty to pursue; and, viewed in such a light, it is of great importance.

During his stay at Newcastle, Wesley received and enter-

tained a strange visitor in his Orphan House. This was none other than a popish priest. Twelve months before, a royal proclamation had been published, ordering the laws against papists to be enforced, and commanding all such religionists to depart from the cities of London and Westminster; and likewise forbidding them to leave their country homes, in any direction, for more than five miles' distance. This proclamation was occasioned by the preparations that were being made by the young Pretender to invade Great Britain. Papists, and especially papistical priests, were regarded, by the general public, with suspicion and abhorrence. This was natural. Their disloyalty to the house of Hanover was a well known fact; and their intrigues, in favour of the Stuart family, were now culminating in the approaching invasion on behalf of the eldest son of James II. Under such circumstances, it was a bold, we think an imprudent, act for Wesley to make a priest of the Church of Rome his guest. Still the visit led to results which, to the writer at least, are interesting. 1745 Age 42

The priest's name was Adams, or Watson Adams. His home was at Osmotherley (the author's native place), a village of about a thousand inhabitants, sixty miles south of Newcastle. The place had been famous as a papistical settlement, and was still resorted to by not a few adherents of that religion. The writer's grandmother, for a long series of years, walked, every Sunday morning, over a bleak, roadless moor, full of bogs and pitfalls, a distance of at least twelve miles there and back, for the purpose of attending, in Osmotherley chapel, the reading of a few Latin prayers, not a word of which had she scholarship enough to understand. Here had been an important convent of Franciscan friars, the chapel of which was still standing. In the immediate neighbourhood were the ruins of another popish edifice, known by the name of "the Lady's chapel"; and, within a mile, were the beautiful and extensive remains of Mount Grace, a Carthusian priory, founded in 1396.

Wesley's account of the priest's visit is as follows:—

"March 28.—A gentleman called at our house, and said, that he lived at Osmotherley, in Yorkshire; and had heard so many strange accounts

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of the Methodists, that he could not rest till he came to inquire for himself. I told him he was welcome to stay as long as he pleased, if he could live on our Lenten fare. He made no difficulty of this, and willingly stayed till the Monday sennight following; when he returned home, fully satisfied with his journey."

The odd acquaintance thus begun was perpetuated. A week after this (on Easter Monday), Wesley began the day by preaching, at half-past four o'clock, to a large congregation, including "many of the rich and honourable." He then set out for London, and, at eight o'clock, preached in the open air, to "a large and quiet congregation," at Chester-le-street. Starting again, he reached Northallerton in the evening, and made the inn his preaching place. The priest, Adams, and some of his neighbours, including Elizabeth Tyerman, a Quakeress, formed part of his congregation. The priest wished Wesley to come and preach in his house at Osmotherley. The invitation was at once accepted; Wesley mounted; and, travelling up hill and down hill, seven miles more, reached the village a little before ten at night; having ridden during the day, over execrable roads, a distance of at least sixty miles, and preached thrice. Of course, at this season of the year, it had long been dark; and, in a village so sequestered, most of the inhabitants had retired to rest; but the priest and his friends went round the place, and, arousing the people, succeeded, in about an hour, in collecting a congregation in the chapel which formerly belonged to the Franciscan friars. Wesley preached to them, and, after midnight, went to bed, feeling, as he expressed it, "no weariness at all." At five in the morning, he preached again, on Romans iii. 22, a sermon, in a popish chapel, on the great anti-popish doctrine of justification by faith alone, part of the congregation having sat up all night for fear they should not awake in sufficient time to hear him. Many of them either were or had been papists, and one who was present was the Quakeress already mentioned. After the sermon, this unbaptized woman, abruptly addressing Wesley, asked, "Dost thou think water baptism an ordinance of Christ?" Wesley replied, "What saith Peter? 'Who can forbid water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Ghost even as we?'" Wesley adds: "I spoke but little more, before she cried out,

"'Tis right! 'tis right! I will be baptized." And so she was, the same hour."[1] 1745 Age 42

On reaching Leeds, a week afterwards, Wesley wrote, as follows, to his brother Charles.

"LEEDS, *April* 23, 1745.

"DEAR BROTHER,—It was time for me to give them the ground at Newcastle, and to fly for my life. I grew more and more honourable every day: the rich and great flocking to us together, so that many times the room would not hold them. Iniquity, for the present, hath stopped her mouth; and it is almost fashionable to speak well of us. In all appearance, if I had stayed a month longer, the mayor and aldermen would have been with us."

He then proceeds to give an account of his journey to Northallerton, where he found "a noble people, who received the word with all readiness of mind"; and of his setting out for Osmotherley, where he says: "I preached in a large chapel which belonged, a few years since, to a convent of Franciscan friars. I found I was got into the very centre of all the papists in the north of England. '*Commessatorem haud satis commodum.*' This also hath God wrought."[2]

Thus began Methodism in Osmotherley, Wesley preaching the first sermon, in a popish chapel, at eleven o'clock at night, having been brought to the place by a popish priest and a Quaker woman. A society was formed soon after, the original class papers and society book of which, for 1750, and onwards, are still in existence. Four years afterwards, a chapel was erected, which still stands, and which, up to the year 1865, for the long period of one hundred and eleven years, was uninterruptedly occupied as a Methodist place of worship, being, with one exception (Coleford, in Somersetshire), the oldest Methodist chapel in the world, continuously used as such. In it, the writer was converted, and painfully he regrets that, in the present mania for new chapels, the society,

[1] An old Methodist, Jenny Meek, who knew Wesley well, told the writer that the baptism of this energetic sister took place, not in the popish chapel, but in an adjoining house. Many an hour, when a child, did I sit listening, with rapt attention, to old Jenny's Methodist traditions, and to this I trace, in a great degree, my passion for old Methodist matters.—L. T.

[2] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 104.

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without the least necessity, were barbarous enough to quit it for a more modern structure, not a whit more adapted to their church necessities, and, of course, destitute of the unequalled memories belonging to the ugly, but venerable pile, now, we fear, left to rats and ruin.

Osmotherley, nestled beneath moorland mountains, was one of Wesley's favourite haunts. Though seven miles from the direct road between London and Newcastle, and a place difficult to reach, he paid at least sixteen visits to the place to which he was so strangely introduced. Nor did he forget or neglect his old friend, the popish priest. His house, on some occasions, was Wesley's home. When he visited him, in 1776, he found him "just quivering over the grave"; and, at his visit a year later, he writes:—"I found my old friend was just dead, after living a recluse life near fifty years. From one that attended him, I learned that the sting of death was gone, and he calmly delivered up his soul to God."

Leaving a place, for lingering too long at which the writer craves forbearance, we must follow Wesley in his evangelistic wanderings. He made his way to Sykehouse, to Epworth, and to Grimsby, at which last mentioned town he preached to a "stupidly rude and noisy congregation, encouraged thereto by a drunken alehouse keeper." At Epworth, he preached at the market cross, having most of the adults in the town to hear him. He went to his father's church, and there heard his old acquaintance, John Romley, preach a sermon which, "from beginning to end, was a railing accusation." He returned to Leeds, Armley, Birstal, and Bradford.

Leaving the west riding, he made a tour in Lancashire, Cheshire, and Derbyshire, and then came round to Sheffield, where he preached on the floor of the Methodist meeting-house, "which the good Protestant mob had just pulled down," to the largest and one of the quietest Sheffield congregations he had ever seen. He then made his way to Nottingham, Wednesbury, and Birmingham, at the last of which places "stones and dirt were flying from every side, almost without intermission, for near an hour." On Saturday, May 11, he got to London, from which he had been absent about twelve weeks. Here he found things in an unsatis-

factory state. There were more than two thousand members, above two thirds of whom were women.[1] "The sower of tares had not been idle. Many were shaken; and some, who once seemed pillars, were moved from their steadfastness." Numbers were "hugely in love" with what Wesley calls, "that solemn trifle, Robert Barclay's Apology." This he and his brother read over with them. "Their eyes were opened; they saw Barclay's nakedness, and were ashamed." 1745 Age 42

Having employed a month in London, Wesley set out for Cornwall, where he spent the next five weeks. The persecutions he encountered have been related at the commencement of the present chapter. Suffice it to remark here, that, during this Cornish tour, he did what he was rarely permitted to do elsewhere; he preached in not fewer than four churches, with the consent, or at the request, of their respective ministers. An odd event also happened to him at St. Just, where, as he himself was about to begin to preach, a kind of gentlewoman took his place, and "scolded, screamed, spit, and stamped, wrung her hands and distorted her face," most violently. She had been bred a papist, and had been rejoiced to hear that Wesley was one; but, being now undeceived and disappointed, her anger was quite equal to what her joy had been. Like a true philosopher, Wesley let the vociferous lady have all the talking to herself, and "took no notice of her at all, good or bad." Wesley returned to London on August 16.

Terrible was the national excitement which now existed. A few weeks before, Charles Edward Stuart had embarked from Brittany, with about fifty of his Scotch and Irish adherents, and had set up his standard in Scotland, emblazoned with the motto, "*Tandem triumphans.*" On the 4th of September, he proclaimed his father in the town of Perth; within a fortnight, he entered Edinburgh; and, a few days afterwards, fought the royal troops at Preston Pans, and was victorious. Under the pretentious title of "regent of the kingdoms of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland," he marched his increasing forces to Carlisle, Lancaster, Manchester, and Derby; and

[1] Wesley's unpublished journal.

1745 Age 42 was then driven back to Scotland, where, on April 16, 1746, was fought the decisive battle of Culloden. These brief remarks will help to illustrate Wesley's Journal.

Five days after the proclamation of the Pretender, namely, on September 9, Wesley set out from London to Newcastle. On his way he called upon Doddridge, the great Dissenter, and addressed his students. His purpose was to go round by Epworth; but, "hearing of more and more commotions in the north," he hastened to Newcastle. At Leeds, the mob pelted him and his society with dirt and stones, and were "ready to knock out all their brains for joy that the Duke of Tuscany was emperor." At Osmotherley, he took occasion to visit the Carthusian priory, already mentioned; and, after describing the walls, cells, and gardens, expressed a sentiment which, however just, was at that time far from being popular:—"Who knows but some of the poor superstitious monks, who once served God here according to the light they had, may meet us, by-and-by, in that house of God, 'not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens'?" On September 18, he reached Newcastle, in, what he calls, an "acceptable time."

News had just arrived that the Pretender had entered Edinburgh. The inhabitants were in the utmost consternation. Wesley at once commenced preaching, selecting as his text, "Who can tell, if God will return, and repent, and turn away from His fierce anger, that we perish not?" The *Newcastle Courant*, for September 14 to September 21, is before us, containing an account of an association of his majesty's Protestant subjects in Ireland, pledging their faith and honour, that they will, at the hazard of their lives and fortunes, oppose the abominable and unnatural rebellion now carried on in favour of the popish Pretender. There is also an address to the king by seven hundred and thirty of the merchants of London, and from the lord provost, magistrates, and council of Edinburgh, to the same effect.

The following loyal, if not finished, lines are published:—

"Rouse, Britons, rouse, before it be too late,
Join heart and hand, or slavery is your fate;
Remember how your fathers bravely stood,
And neither spared their treasure, nor their blood,

Preserved your liberties, and Church, and state;
Your sons cry out, *Remember eighty-eight.*"

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The day after Wesley's arrival, Mr. Ridley, the mayor, summoned all the householders of Newcastle to meet him at the town hall, and to sign an agreement, to the effect that they would hazard their goods and lives, in defending the town against the common enemy. He ordered the townsmen to be under arms, and to mount guard in turns. Pilgrim Street gate, just outside of which was Wesley's Orphan House, was walled up; and Wesley and his society spent the day in fasting and in prayer. The agreement submitted by the mayor, and which was signed by eight hundred and thirteen inhabitants of the town, was, that they "do voluntarily oblige themselves to appear in person, or to provide daily, or when required, an able man to act in concert with his majesty's forces in the town, for the defence thereof, against all his majesty's enemies."[1] As Wesley did not accompany the householders to meet the mayor, he wrote to him the following letter:—

"*To the Worshipful the Mayor of Newcastle.*

"SIR,—My not waiting upon you at the town hall was not owing to any want of respect. I reverence you for your office' sake; and much more for your zeal in the execution of it. I would to God, every magistrate in the land would copy after such an example! Much less was it owing to any disaffection to his majesty King George. But I knew not how far it might be either necessary or proper for me to appear on such an occasion. I have no fortune at Newcastle: I have only the bread I eat, and the use of a little room for a few weeks in the year.

"All I can do for his majesty, whom I honour and love,—I think not less than I did my own father,—is this: I cry unto God, day by day, in public and in private, to put all his enemies to confusion; and I exhort all that hear me to do the same; and, in their several stations, to exert themselves as loyal subjects; who, so long as they fear God, cannot but honour the king.

"Permit me, sir, to add a few words more, out of the fulness of my heart. I am persuaded you fear God, and have a deep sense that His kingdom ruleth over all. Unto whom then (I may ask you), should we flee for succour, but unto Him whom, by our sins, we have justly displeased? O, sir, is it not possible to give any check to these overflowings of ungodliness? to the open, flagrant wickedness, the drunkenness and profaneness, which so abound, even in our streets? I just take leave

[1] Brand's History of Newcastle, vol. ii., p. 525.

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to suggest this. May the God whom you serve direct you in this, and all things! This is the daily prayer of, sir,

"Your obedient servant, for Christ's sake,

"JOHN WESLEY."

This was written on September 21, on which day arrived the news of General Cope's disastrous defeat at Preston Pans. Newcastle was seized with panic. Many of the opulent of the inhabitants fled with the utmost precipitation, taking their most valuable effects with them. Wesley writes:—

"September 22.—The walls are mounted with cannon, and all things prepared for sustaining an assault. Our poor neighbours, on either hand, are busy in removing their goods. And most of the best houses in our street are left without either furniture or inhabitants. Those within the walls are almost equally busy in carrying away their money and their goods; and more and more of the gentry every hour ride southward as fast as they can. At eight, I preached at Gateshead, in a broad part of the street, near the popish chapel, on the wisdom of God in governing the world."

Meanwhile, part of the Northumberland militia entered the town, namely, about four hundred horse, and above two hundred foot,[1] all well armed, and headed by the county gentlemen. Still the alarms continued, and the storm seemed nearer every day. "Many," says Wesley, "wondered we would still stay without the walls; others told us, we must remove quickly; for if the cannon began to play from the top of the gates, they would beat all the house about our ears. This made me look how the cannon on the gates were planted; and I could not but adore the providence of God, for it was obvious—(1) they were all planted in such a manner, that no shot could touch our house; (2) the cannon on Newgate so secured us on one side, and those upon Pilgrim Street gate on the other, that none could come near our house, either way, without being torn in pieces."

Amid the most terrible alarms, Wesley continued preaching in Newcastle, and visiting the country societies round about. On October 8 he wrote the following characteristic letter to General Husk:—

"A surly man came to me this evening, as he said, from you. He would not deign to come upstairs to me, nor so much as into the house;

[1] Brand's History.

but stood in the yard till I came, and then obliged me to go with him into the street, where he said, 'You must pull down the battlements of your house, or to-morrow the general will pull them down for you.' 1745 Age 42

"Sir, to me this is nothing. But I humbly conceive it would not be proper for this man, whoever he is, to behave in such a manner to any other of his majesty's subjects, at so critical a time as this.

"I am ready, if it may be for his majesty's service, to pull not only the battlements, but the house down; or to give up any part of it, or the whole, into your excellency's hands."

Besides the troops already mentioned, the town had been reinforced by the entrance of six hundred Dutch soldiers, belonging to the regiment of General de la Rocque; and gentlemen volunteers had become expert in military exercise, especially the company with red and pink cockades. All persons residing outside the walls were ordered to take their ladders to the town's yard, and their firearms to the mayor; and no person was to fire a gun at night under pain of imprisonment. Two hundred cannon were planted on the town walls; and the water gates on the quay side were all built up with gun holes in them.[1]

Wesley, supposing the danger was over for the present, started off, on October 9, on a short tour to Epworth, leaving John Trembath to supply his place. At Ferrybridge he was conducted to General Wentworth, who read all the letters he had about him. At Doncaster, where he slept, or rather wished to sleep, he was surrounded by drunken, cursing, swearing soldiers. At Epworth, he had, for once, the satisfaction of hearing Mr. Romley preach "an earnest, affectionate sermon"; while he himself strongly exhorted the society to "fear God, and honour the king." He then returned to Newcastle, by way of Sheffield, Birstal, Leeds, and Osmotherley, arriving on October 22, after an absence of thirteen days.

Within a week, the right honourable Fieldmarshal Wade, and Prince Maurice of Nassau, arrived with about nine thousand Dutch and English soldiers, which, when added to General St. George's dragoons, General Sinclair's Royal Scots, and other troops, made about fifteen thousand men, all encamped upon Newcastle moor.[2] With such an influx,

[1] Brand's History. [2] Ibid.

1745 Age 42 no wonder that wickedness abounded. Wesley was horrified, and on October 26 sent to Mr. Ridley, the mayor, the following letter :—

"SIR,—The fear of God, the love of my country, and the regard I have for his majesty King George, constrain me to write a few plain words to one who is no stranger to these principles of action.

"My soul has been pained day by day, even in walking the streets of Newcastle, at the senseless, shameless wickedness, the ignorant profaneness, of the poor men to whom our lives are entrusted. The continual cursing and swearing, the wanton blasphemy of the soldiers in general, must needs be a torture to the sober ear, whether of a Christian or an honest infidel. Can any that either fear God, or love their neighbour, hear this without concern? especially if they consider the interest of our country, as well as of these unhappy men themselves. For can it be expected, that God should be on their side who are daily affronting Him to His face? And if God be not on their side, how little will either their number, or courage, or strength avail?

"Is there no man that careth for these souls? Doubtless there are some who ought so to do. But many of these, if I am rightly informed, receive large pay, and do just nothing.

"I would to God it were in my power, in any degree, to supply their lack of service. I am ready to do what in me lies, to call these poor sinners to repentance, once or twice a day (while I remain in these parts), at any hour, or at any place. And I desire no pay at all for doing this; unless what my Lord shall give at His appearing.

"If it be objected (from our heathenish poet), 'this conscience will make cowards of us all,' I answer, let us judge by matter of fact. Let either friends or enemies speak. Did those who feared God behave as cowards at Fontenoy? Did John Haime, the dragoon, betray any cowardice, before or after his horse sunk under him? Or did William Clements, when he received the first ball in his left, and the second in his right arm? Or John Evans, when the cannon ball took off both his legs? Did he not call all about him, as long as he could speak, to praise and fear God, and honour the king? as one who feared nothing, but lest his last breath should be spent in vain.

"If it were objected, that I should only fill their heads with peculiar whims and notions; that might easily be known. Only let the officers hear with their own ears; and they may judge whether I do not preach the plain principles of manly, rational religion.

"Having myself no knowledge of the general, I took the liberty to make this offer to you. I have no interest herein; but I should rejoice to serve, as I am able, my king and country. If it be judged, that this will be of no real service, let the proposal die, and be forgotten. But I beg you, sir, to believe, that I have the same glorious cause, for which you have shown so becoming a zeal, earnestly at heart; and that therefore, I am, with warm respect, sir,— Your most obedient servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."

The mayor sent a message, to the effect that he would communicate the proposal to the general. We are not told whether the general gave his consent or not; but, five days afterwards, we find Wesley, in the midst of this huge encampment, preaching from, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters!" "None," says he, "attempted to make the least disturbance, from the beginning to the end. Yet I could not reach their hearts The words of a scholar did not affect them, like those of a dragoon or a grenadier." 1745 Age 42

In such circumstances, Wesley honestly acknowledges, that a layman, like John Haime, the brave dragoon, would have been more effective than himself. This, however, did not discourage him. The day following, he preached to the troops again. On this occasion, a lieutenant endeavoured to raise disturbance; but, when Wesley had finished, tried to make amends, by telling the soldiers that all that had been said was very good.

The next day, Saturday, November 2, his text was, "The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise might be given to them that believe;" and he now began to see some fruit of his labour. On the Sunday, the camp was again his cathedral. Abundance of people flocked together, horse and foot, rich and poor, to whom he declared, "There is no difference; for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." He had long laid aside the German tongue, but, seeing a number of Germans standing disconsolate at the skirts of the congregation, he also addressed them, the poor troopers drinking in every word.

This terminated his labours in the camp on Newcastle moor. The next day he set out for London, and spoiled the Guy Fawkes holiday in Leeds, by informing the magistrates that he had met several expresses, sent to countermand the march of the army into Scotland; and that the rebels had passed the Tweed, and were marching southward. The hurry in the streets was quashed; bonfires were abandoned; and guns, squibs, and crackers were no longer the playthings of the uproarious crowd. Wesley proceeded on his journey, finding watchmen standing, with great solemnity, at the end of almost every village through which he passed. On entering Wednesbury, after it was dark, he was bogged in a quag-

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mire; the people came with candles; and, getting out, and leaving them to disengage his horse, he hastened to Francis Ward's, and, bedaubed with mire, at once commenced preaching. On the 13th of November he arrived safe in London, where he spent the rest of the year, in preaching, and finishing his "Farther Appeal." He gave away some thousands of tracts among the common people; and his example was immediately copied by others. The lord mayor ordered a large quantity of papers, dissuading from cursing and swearing, to be printed, and distributed to the trainbands; and on December 18 "An Earnest Exhortation to Repentance" was given at all the church doors in London, to every person who came out, and a copy left at the house of every householder who happened to be absent. "I doubt not," says Wesley, "but God gave a blessing therewith."

Wesley's old friend and brother-in-law, Westley Hall, was already a waverer; and, at the end of 1745, wrote a long letter, urging the two Wesleys to renounce the Church of England. Wesley's reply is too long for insertion here; but it contains, besides other facts, some startling high church principles, which are well worth noting. He writes:—

"We believe it would not be right for us to administer either baptism or the Lord's supper, unless we had a commission so to do from those bishops whom we apprehend to be in a succession from the apostles."

"We believe there is, and always was, in every Christian church (whether dependent on the bishop of Rome or not), an outward priesthood, ordained by Jesus Christ, and an outward sacrifice offered therein, by men authorised to act as ambassadors of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God."

"We believe that the threefold order of ministers is not only authorised by its apostolical institution, but also by the written word."

We must take Wesley as we find him; but is it not surprising to see him still tenaciously clinging, even in phraseology, to the doctrine of apostolical succession, and the offering of an *outward sacrifice* in the church, by an outward priesthood? He proceeds:—

"We allow, that many of the laws, customs, and practices of the ecclesiastical courts are really indefensible; but we no more look upon these filthy abuses, which adhere to our Church, as part of the building, than we look upon any filth which may adhere to the walls of Westminster Abbey as a part of that structure."

"We will obey all the laws of that Church (such as we allow the rubrics to be, but not the customs of the ecclesiastical courts), so far as we can with a safe conscience; and, with the same restriction, we will obey the bishops, as executors of those laws; but their bare will, distinct from those laws, we do not profess to obey at all."

"Field preaching is contrary to no law which we profess to obey; nor are we clear, that the allowing lay preachers is contrary to any such law. But if it is, this is one of the exempt cases; one wherein we cannot obey with a safe conscience."

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We have here a key to much in Wesley's remarkable career. His doctrine of apostolical succession was a figment. His language concerning Church of England *priests* still offering an *outward sacrifice* savoured of the popish doctrine which all true Protestants reject, though, as will shortly be shown, the view he held was different from what his words express. His belief in the "threefold order of ministers" was changed a few weeks afterwards. Field preaching and the employment of lay preachers had much to do with making Methodism; and, without a continuance of these, Methodism will not maintain its power and its position.

Wesley's conference, in 1745, commenced at Bristol, on the 1st of August, and was continued for five days following. Besides the two Wesleys, there was but one clergyman, Mr. Hodges, present. There were six itinerants: Thomas Richards, Samuel Larwood, Thomas Meyrick, Richard Moss, John Slocomb, and Herbert Jenkins; and also one gentleman, who was not a preacher at all, Marmaduke Gwynne, afterwards the father-in-law of Wesley's brother Charles.

At the opening of the conference a principle was adopted, which ought to be practised in all similar assemblies, namely, that every one might speak freely whatever was in his heart, and that no one should be checked, either by word or look, even though what he was saying was entirely wrong.[1] In an assembly of equals, met for purposes of deliberation and counsel, free speech like this is indispensable to satisfactory results.

During the first day of conference, the doctrine of justification was reviewed; and it was agreed, that, while faith in Christ is the sole condition of justification, repentance,

[1] Minutes (edit. 1862), vol. i.

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that is, conviction of sin, must go before faith, and (supposing there be opportunity for them) fruits, or works meet for repentance, also.

On the second day, the conference discussed the doctrines of assurance, of works done before justification, and of obedience. It was agreed neither to discourage nor encourage dreams, though it was admitted, that, by such means, saving faith is often given. On the subject of sanctification it was laid down, that inward sanctification begins in the moment we are justified; that, from that time, the believer gradually dies to sin, and grows in grace; and that the seed of all sin remains in him, till he is sanctified throughout, in spirit, soul, and body. This entire sanctification is not ordinarily given till a little before death; but we ought to expect it sooner; for, though the generality of believers are not sanctified till near death, and though few of those to whom St. Paul wrote his epistles were so at the time he wrote, and though he himself was not sanctified at the time of writing his former epistles, this does not prove that we may not be sanctified to-day. It was further agreed, that sanctification should scarcely be preached at all to those who were not pressing forward; and when it was, it should always be by way of promise,—by drawing, rather than by driving. And, further, it was determined, that the *general* means which God has ordained for our receiving His sanctifying grace are keeping all His commandments, denying ourselves, and taking up our cross daily; and, that the *particular* are prayer, searching the Scriptures, communicating, and fasting.

The Methodist reader will find something here hardly in harmony with the decisions of the previous conference, and with Wesley's subsequent teaching. Twenty years after this, in answer to the question, "What shall we do, that this work of God may be wrought in us?" Wesley said:—

"In this, as in all other instances, 'by grace we are saved through faith.' Sanctification too is 'not of works lest any man should boast.' 'It is the gift of God,' and is to be received by plain simple faith. Suppose you are now labouring to abstain from all appearance of evil, zealous of good works, and walking diligently and carefully in all the ordinances of God; there is then only one point remaining: the voice of God to your soul is, 'Believe, and be saved.' First, believe that God has *pro-*

mised to save you from all sin, and to fill you with all holiness. Secondly, believe that He is *able* thus to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through Him. Thirdly, believe that He is *willing* as well as able. Fourthly, believe that He is not only able, but willing to do it *now!* Not when you come to die, not at any distant time, not to-morrow, but to-day. He will then enable you to believe, *it is done*, according to His word; and then 'patience shall have its perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.'"[1] 1745 Age 42

At the third day's session, the Conference debated points of church government. The question was asked, "Is episcopal, presbyterian, or independent church government most agreeable to reason?" The answer given was, that each is a development of the other. A preacher preaches, and forms an *independent* congregation; he then forms another and another in the immediate vicinity of the first; this obliges him to appoint *deacons*, who look on the first pastor as their common father; and as these congregations increase, and as their *deacons* grow in years and grace, they need other subordinate deacons, or helpers; in respect of whom they are called *presbyters*, or elders; as their father in the Lord may be called the *bishop*, or overseer of them all. To say the least, this solution is ingenious.

With reference to Wesley's assistants, fourteen in number, it was resolved, that they had nothing to do but to save souls; and that, in prosecuting this, they should, besides preaching every morning and every night, spend from six o'clock till twelve every day in reading, writing, and prayer; from twelve to five in visiting; and from five to six in private communion with God.

It was also determined what books should constitute the libraries for Wesley's own use, at London, Bristol, and Newcastle,—namely, eleven on divinity; four on physic; two on natural philosophy; one (Whiston) on astronomy; one (the Universal) on history; two (Spenser and Milton) in poetry; sixteen in Latin; twelve in Greek; and one (Buxtorf's Bible) in Hebrew.

While Wesley was thus conferring with his lay itinerants, he was, unconsciously, corresponding with a man, who soon became the highest dignitary in the Established Church.

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. vi., p. 466.

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Thomas Secker was six years the senior of Wesley. His father was a Dissenter, and he himself was designed for the Dissenting ministry. Scruples of conscience prevented this, and young Secker resolved to qualify himself for the practice of physic. At Leyden, he took the degree of M.D.; but, on returning to England, in 1721, he entered himself a gentleman commoner at Exeter College, Oxford; and, in the year following, was ordained a deacon of the Church of England. In 1724, he became rector of the valuable living of Houghton-le-spring; and, in 1725, married Bishop Benson's sister. In 1733, he obtained the rectory of St. James's; and, the year after, was raised to the see of Bristol. In 1737, he was translated to the diocese of Oxford; and, in 1758, was advanced to the primacy.

In the month of May, 1745, this distinguished man commenced a long, temperate, and able correspondence with Wesley, under the *alias* of John Smith. The correspondence was continued for nearly three years, and was first published by Mr. Moore, in his Life of Wesley, in 1825. Space forbids even an epitome of these able letters. They are full of interest, intelligence, and piety; and do honour to the head and heart of both the archbishop and the clerical itinerant.

The only thing which remains, before leaving the year 1745, is to notice Wesley's publications. His answer to Church; his Dialogues on Antinomianism; and his Short View of the Difference between the Moravians and himself, have been already mentioned. The rest were partly original, and partly abridgments from the works of others.

1. "Thoughts concerning the present Revival of Religion in New England. By Jonathan Edwards. Abridged by John Wesley." 12mo, 124 pages. This deeply interesting work was first published at Boston, in America, in a volume of more than two hundred pages, and has been referred to already in a previous chapter of the present book.

2. "An Extract of Mr. Richard Baxter's Aphorisms on Justification." 12mo, 36 pages. The pamphlet is divided into forty-five propositions, and, like all Baxter's works, is full of Scripture truth, and well worth reading.

3. "Hymns on the Lord's Supper; by John and Charles Wesley. With a preface concerning the Christian Sacrament

and Sacrifice. Extracted from Dr. Brevint. By John Wesley." 12mo, 141 pages. The hymns are a hundred and sixty-six in number, and are distinguished by great variety of thought and language. Several of the best are published in the Methodist Hymn-book. An extract from Brevint, which, by publishing, Wesley made his own, will help to explain his meaning in the objectionable phraseology he employed in his letter to Westley Hall. 1745 Age 42

"The Lord's supper was chiefly ordained for a sacrament: 1. To *represent* the sufferings of Christ which are *past*, whereof it is a *memorial*. 2. To *convey* the first fruits of these sufferings, in *present graces*, whereof it is a *means*. 3. To *assure* us of *glory to come*, whereof it is an infallible *pledge*."

"The sacrifice, which by a *real* oblation was not to be offered more than once, is, by a devout and thankful commemoration, to be offered up every day. The *sacrifice* in itself can never be repeated. Nevertheless, this sacrament, by our remembrance, becomes a *kind of sacrifice*, whereby we present before God the Father that precious oblation of His Son once offered. To *men*, the holy communion is a *sacred table*, where God's minister is ordered to represent, from God his Master, the passion of His dear Son, as still fresh, and still powerful for their eternal salvation. And to *God*, it is an *altar*, whereon men mystically present to Him the same sacrifice, as still bleeding and sueing for mercy."

The remainder of Wesley's publications, in 1745, were original: namely:—

1. "An Earnest Persuasive to keep the Sabbath holy." Four pages, 12mo. This was afterwards reprinted as "A Word to a Sabbath-breaker."

Sabbath breaking, in the days of Wesley, was one of the crying sins of England. "How many are they," he wrote, "in every city, as well as in this, who profane the sabbath with a high hand! How many in this, that openly defy God and the king, that break the laws, both Divine and human, by working at their trade, delivering their goods, receiving their pay, or following their ordinary business, in one branch or another, and 'wiping their mouths and saying, I do no evil!' How many buy and sell on the day of the Lord, even in the open streets of this city? How many open, or (with some modesty) half open their shops? even when they have not the pretence of perishable goods; without any pretence at all: money is their god, and gain their godliness. What also are

1745 Age 42 all these droves in the skirts of the town, that well-nigh cover the face of the earth? till they drop one after another into the numerous receptacles prepared for them in every corner. They drink in iniquity like water. A whole army joins together, and, with one consent, in the face of the sun, runs upon the thick bosses of God's buckler."[1]

This, written in 1745, is too true a picture of the state of things at the present day. Wesley regarded national depravity as turning chiefly on the two hinges of sabbath profanation, and the neglect of the education of children. Till some way was found of stopping these great inlets of wickedness, he had no hope of a general reformation. "The religious observance of the sabbath," he writes, "is the best preservative of virtue and religion, and the neglect and profanation of it is the greatest inlet to vice and wickedness."[2] Holding such views, no wonder that he published the pointed, pithy tract to which we are now adverting.

2. "Swear not at all, saith the Lord God of Heaven and Earth." Four pages, 12mo. This also was reprinted as "A Word to a Swearer." Like all Wesley's tracts, it is a model well worthy of imitation. Profane swearing was another of the senseless, stupid, shameless sins of the period in which Wesley lived. In another of his publications, issued in 1745, he asks: "In what city or town, in what market or exchange, in what street or place of public resort, is not the name of God taken in vain, day by day? From the noble to the peasant, who fails to call upon God in this, if in no other way? Whither can you turn, where can you go, without hearing some praying to God for damnation, either on his neighbour or himself? cursing those, without either fear or remorse, whom Christ hath bought to inherit a blessing!"[3]

3. "A Word in Season; or, Advice to an Englishman." Twelve pages, 12mo. This was published at the beginning of the rebellion, and shows what would be the dreadful results if the Pretender should become king of England by conquest. Popery would be established, and property would be confiscated. "Who can doubt," he asks, "but one who should

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. viii., p. 155. [2] Ibid. vol. xi., p. 320.
[3] Ibid. vol. viii., p. 145.

conquer England, by the assistance of France, would copy after the French rules of government?" He continues :— 1745 Age 42

"How dreadful then is the condition wherein we stand! On the very brink of utter destruction! But why are we thus? I am afraid the answer is too plain, to every considerate man. Because of our sins; because we have well-nigh filled up the measure of our iniquities. For what wickedness is there under heaven, which is not found among us at this day? Not to insist on sabbath breaking, thefts, cheating, fraud, extortion, violence, oppression, lying, robberies, sodomies and murders, which with a thousand unnamed villainies are common to us and our neighbour Christians of Holland, France, and Germany,—what a plentiful harvest we have of wickedness almost peculiar to ourselves! For who can *vie with us* in the direction of courts of *justice?* In the management of public *charities?* Or in the *accomplished*, barefaced wickedness, which so abounds in our *prisons*, and *fleets*, and *armies?* Who in *Europe* can compare with the *sloth*, *laziness*, *luxury*, and *effeminacy* of the *English gentry?* Or with the *drunkenness*, and stupid, senseless *cursing* and *swearing*, which are daily seen and heard in our streets? Add to all these that open and professed *Deism* and *rejection* of the gospel,—that *public, avowed* apostasy from the Christian faith, which reigns among the rich and great, and hath spread from *them* to *all* ranks and orders of men, and made us a people fitted for the *destroyer of the gentiles.*"

This, under the circumstances then existing, was bold writing; but Wesley was a bold man, and never shunned what he conceived to be his duty because it was difficult and dangerous.

4. "A Word to a Drunkard." Four pages, 12mo. The following are the opening sentences :—

"Are *you* a man? God made you a *man;* but you make yourself a *beast.* Wherein does a *man* differ from a *beast?* Is it not chiefly in *reason and understanding?* But you throw away what *reason* you have. You strip yourself of your *understanding.* You do all you can to make yourself a mere *beast;* not a fool, not a madman only; but a *swine*, a poor filthy swine. Go and wallow with them in the mire! Go, drink on, till thy nakedness be uncovered, and shameful spewing be on thy glory! O how honourable is a *beast* of God's making, compared to one who makes himself a *beast!* But that is not all. You make yourself a *devil.* You stir up all the devilish tempers that are in you, and gain others which perhaps were not in you. You cause the fire of anger, or malice, or lust to burn seven times hotter than before."

5. It was also about this period, that Wesley wrote and published his small tract (12mo, four pages), entitled, "A Word to an Unhappy Woman."

6. "Advice to the People called Methodists." Twelve pages,

1745 Age 42 12mo. The advices are five in number :—1. To consider, with deep and frequent attention, the peculiar circumstances in which they stood; for their name, their principles, and their strictness of life were *new*. They were *newly united* together, —a poor, low, and insignificant people,—most even of their teachers being quite unlearned men. 2. Not to imagine that they could avoid giving offence. 3. To consider deeply with themselves, is the God whom we serve able to deliver us? 4. To be true to their principles. 5. Not to talk much of what they suffered.

7. Wesley's last and most important publication was, "A Farther Appeal to men of Reason and Religion." 12mo, 106 pages.

First of all, he gives a summary of the doctrines he teaches. He then proceeds to meet the objection, that justification by faith alone is not a scriptural doctrine, nor the doctrine of the Church of England. He next replies to the accusations of the Bishop of London, in his pamphlet, entitled, "Observations upon the Conduct and Behaviour of the Methodists," which had been sent to every clergyman in the London diocese. Whitefield had already published an answer to this episcopal production, in two letters, addressed "to the right reverend the Bishop of London, and the other right reverend the bishops concerned in the publication thereof;" and now Wesley undertakes the same formidable task,—David against Goliath,—an outcast priest against a whole bench of bishops. Wesley dissects the prelate's pamphlet, and, with a master's brevity, refutes it bit by bit. He then replies to a similar production, which has been already noticed, "The Notions of the Methodists Disproved;" and after that proceeds to answer the "charge," lately published by the Lord Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, Dr. Smalbroke, a man of some ability, but not over skilled in logic, who, in one of his best productions, "A Vindication of our Saviour's Miracles," showed his weakness by calculating the precise number of devils in the herd of Gadarenish swine. Wesley writes :—

"I conceive, not only, that your lordship has *proved* nothing hitherto; but that, strictly speaking, you have not *attempted to prove* anything, having *taken for granted* whatever came in your way. What is become

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of your demonstration? Leave it to the carmen and porters, its just proprietors; to the zealous apple-women, that cry after me in the street, 'This is he that rails at the *Whole Dutyful* of man.' But let every one that pretends to learning or reason be ashamed to mention it any more. O my lord, whom have you represented as rank, dreaming enthusiasts? as either deluded or designing men? Not only Bishop Pearson, a man hitherto accounted both sound in heart, and of good understanding; but likewise Archbishop Cranmer, Bishop Ridley, Bishop Latimer, Bishop Hooper; and all the venerable compilers of our liturgy and homilies: all the members of both the houses of convocation, by whom ther were revised and approved: yea, King Edward, and all his lords and commons together, by whose authority they were established! And, with these *modern enthusiasts*, Origen, Chrysostom, and Athanasius are comprehended in the same censure."

Wesley's object in this important treatise may be gathered from its concluding paragraph:—

"I have now answered most of the current objections, particularly such as have appeared of weight to religious or reasonable men. I have endeavoured to show, first, that the *doctrines* I teach are no other than the great truths of the gospel. Secondly, that though I teach them not as I *would*, but as I *can*, yet it is in a *manner* not contrary to law. And thirdly, that the *effects* of thus preaching the gospel have not been such as was weakly or wickedly reported,—these reports being mere artifices of the devil, to hinder the work of God."

Up to the present, most of Wesley's publications were small and cheap; but they had an immense circulation, and not only paid expenses, but left a profit. In a sermon, written in the year 1780, he naively remarks: "Two-and-forty years ago, having a desire to furnish poor people with cheaper, shorter, and plainer books, than any I had seen, I wrote many small tracts, generally a penny apiece; and afterwards several larger. Some of these had such a sale as I never thought of; and, by this means, I unawares became rich. But I never desired or endeavoured after it. And now that it is come upon me unawares, I lay up no treasures upon earth; I lay up nothing at all. I cannot help leaving my books behind me whenever God calls me hence; but, in every other respect, my own hands will be my executors."[1]

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. vii., p. 9.

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WHITEFIELD and his wife spent the whole of the year 1746 in America. "I love," said he, "to range in the American woods, and sometimes think I shall never return to England any more."[1] Writing to Wesley, in October, he remarks :—

"The regard I have always had for you and your brother is still as great as ever ; and I trust we shall give this and future ages an example of true Christian love abiding, notwithstanding difference in judgment. Why our Lord has permitted us to differ as to some points of doctrine, will be discovered at the last day. I have had the pleasure of reading the continuance of your Appeal ; and pray, that God would prosper every labour of your pen and lip. I find that antinomianism has been springing up in many places. I bless God, you have made a stand against it. If you ask, how it is with me, I answer, happy in Jesus, the Lord my righteousness. If you ask, what I am doing,—ranging and hunting in the American woods after poor sinners. If you ask, with what success,—my labours were never more acceptable ; and the door, for fifteen hundred miles together, is quite open for preaching the everlasting gospel. In Maryland and Virginia, people fly to hear the word like doves to the windows. Congregations are large, and the work is going on, just as it began and went on in England. Notwithstanding the declining state of Georgia, the orphan house is in a better situation than ever ; and, in a year or two, I trust it will support itself. Several of the great and rich favour the Redeemer's cause, and many of my professed enemies are made to be at peace with me. O reverend and dear, and very dear sir, be pleased to continue to pray for me, your most affectionate, though unworthy, younger brother and servant in Jesus Christ,

"GEORGE WHITEFIELD."[2]

Charles Wesley spent more than four months in London and its vicinity ; about six in Bristol, in Cornwall, and in the west of England ; and the last weeks of the year in a tour to Yorkshire and Newcastle. Like a flaming seraph, his soul glowed with sacred love and music ; and no toil, danger, or

[1] Whitefield's Works, vol. ii., p. 83.
[2] *Methodist Magazine*, 1778, p. 418.

persecution was too great to be encountered for his Saviour. In Cornwall, it was rumoured, that he had brought the Pretender with him; and the famous Mr. Eustick came with a warrant to apprehend him: but, as usual, at the last moment, Eustick's courage failed him. At Shoreham, as soon as he commenced the service, the wild rabble "began roaring, stamping, blaspheming, ringing the bells, and turning the church into a bear garden." At Hexham, while preaching in a cockpit, Squire Roberts did his utmost to raise a mob; and two butlers, in the employ of two magistrates, brought their cocks, and set them fighting. In the midst of all, Charles was jubilant, and expressed the gratitude of his heart in the following thanksgiving:— 1746 Age 43

"All thanks be to God,
Who scatters abroad,
Throughout every place,
By the least of His servants, His savour of grace;
Who the victory gave,
The praise let Him have,
For the work He hath done;
All honour and glory to Jesus alone!"[1]

Equal zeal and heroism characterized Wesley's helpers. At Nottingham, the mob surrounded the meeting-house, and threatened to pull it down. John Nelson was seized by the constable for creating the riot, and was taken to an alderman, the crowd following him with curses and huzzas. The alderman asked his name, and said: "I wonder you cannot stay at home; you see the mob won't suffer you to preach in Nottingham." John replied, that he was not aware that Nottingham was governed by a mob, most towns being governed by the magistrates; and then proceeded "to set life and death before him." "Don't preach here," said the alderman; while the constable began to be uneasy, and asked how he was to dispose of his prisoner. "Take him to your house," quoth the alderman. The constable desired to be excused; and, at length, was directed to conduct Nelson back to the place from which he had brought him, and to be careful he was not injured. "So," says honest John, "he

[1] C. Wesley's Journal.

1746 Age 43 brought me to our brethren again; and left us to give thanks to God for all His mercies."

Wesley began the year 1746 by preaching in London at four o'clock in the morning, a thing not often done by his successors.

On January 20, he set out for Bristol, and on the road read a book which greatly moulded his future character and course. Lord King was the son of a grocer at Exeter, and the nephew of the celebrated Locke, who left him half his library. At the age of twenty-two, in 1691, he published, "An Inquiry into the Constitution, Discipline, Unity, and Worship of the Primitive Church, that flourished three hundred years after Christ; faithfully collected out of the extant writings of those ages." King was a rigid Dissenter; and the chief object of his learned work was to prepare the way for that comprehension of the Dissenters within the pale of the Established Church, which the Revolution of 1688 was supposed likely to accomplish. After this, he rose to be Lord High Chancellor of England, and died in 1734, leaving behind him a character of great virtue and humanity, and of steady attachment to civil and religious liberty.

The above book by Lord King was Wesley's companion on his way to Bristol; and, after reading it, he wrote: "In spite of the vehement prejudice of my education, I was ready to believe that this was a fair and impartial draught; but, if so, it would follow, that bishops and presbyters are essentially of one order, and that, originally, every Christian congregation was a church independent of all others."

Thus, notwithstanding his strong affection for the Church of England, we find Wesley, almost at the commencement of his Methodist career, entertaining doubts respecting its ecclesiastical polity. The recorded decisions of the Conference of 1745 plainly show, that he regarded his preachers as deacons, and presbyters, and thought himself a scriptural bishop. Lord King's researches served to confirm these sentiments. In the minutes of the conference held a year after this (1747), we find the following questions and answers:—

"*Q.* Does a church in the New Testament always mean a single congregation?

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"*A.* We believe it does. We do not recollect any instance to the contrary.

"*Q.* What instance or ground is there then in the New Testament for a *national* church?

"*A.* We know none at all. We apprehend it to be a merely political institution.

"*Q.* Are the three orders of bishops, priests, and deacons plainly described in the New Testament?

"*A.* We think they are; and believe they generally obtained in the churches of the apostolic age.

"*Q.* But are you assured, that God designed the same plan should obtain in all churches, throughout all ages?

"*A.* We are not assured of this; because we do not know that it is asserted in Holy Writ.

"*Q.* If this plan were essential to a Christian church, what must become of all the foreign reformed churches?

"*A.* It would follow, that they are no parts of the church of Christ! A consequence full of shocking absurdity.

"*Q.* In what age was the Divine right of episcopacy first asserted in England?

"*A.* About the middle of Queen Elizabeth's reign. Till then all the bishops and clergy in England continually allowed, and joined in, the ministrations of those who were not episcopally ordained.

"*Q.* Must there not be numberless accidental varieties in the government of various churches?

"*A.* There must, in the nature of things. For, as God variously dispenses His gifts of nature, providence, and grace, both the offices themselves and the officers in each ought to be varied from time to time.

"*Q.* Why is it, that there is no determinate plan of church government appointed in Scripture?

"*A.* Without doubt, because the wisdom of God had a regard to this necessary variety.

"*Q.* Was there any thought of uniformity in the government of all churches, until the time of Constantine?

"*A.* It is certain there was not; and would not have been then, had men consulted the word of God only."[1]

This is an important extract. Wesley loved the Church of England; but who will say, that the views of Wesley were now identical with those of the high church bigots of either past or present days! Their views had been his; but he now renounced them. Lord King, the Dissenter, had converted him. His principles, respecting ecclesiastical polity, were changed. After this, we have no more nonsense concerning

[1] Minutes (edit. 1862), vol. i., p. 36.

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apostolical succession. Indeed, in reference to this, Wesley wrote (in 1761): "I never could see it proved; and I am persuaded I never shall."[1] It is not too much to say, that, from the time of reading the book of Lord King, Wesley's principles of ecclesiastical polity were substantially the same as those of Dissenters. He still preferred the Church of England, not because he thought it the only church, but because, upon the whole, he thought it the best. In the above extract, we have the principles deliberately adopted, which laid the groundwork of his future proceedings. As a presbyter, in other words a bishop, he employed preachers, and set them apart to the sacred office. It is true, that it was not until nearly forty years after this, that he began to use the imposition of hands; but that was a mere *circumstance*, not the *essence* of ministerial ordination. Mr. Watson properly observes: "It has been generally supposed, that Mr. Wesley did not consider his appointment of preachers as an *ordination* to the ministry; but only as an irregular employment of laymen in the spiritual office of merely expounding the Scriptures in a case of moral necessity. This is not correct. They were not appointed to expound or preach merely, but were solemnly set apart to the pastoral office; nor were they regarded by him as *laymen*, except when in common parlance they were distinguished from the clergy of the Church."[2] His usual mode of *setting apart or ordaining* to the ministry consisted of a most rigid examination of the ministerial candidate on the three points—Has he grace? Has he gifts? Has he fruit? preceded by fasting and prayer; and followed by official and authoritative appointment to ministerial work. For the present, the form of laying on of hands was not employed; but it was thought of, and was discussed. Hence the following extract from the minutes of the conference held in 1746:—

"*Q.* Why do we not use more form and solemnity in receiving a new labourer?

"*A.* We purposely decline it—(1) Because, there is something of

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. iii., p. 42.
[2] Watson's Works, vol. v., p. 148.

stateliness in it. (3) Because, we would not make haste. We desire barely to follow Providence, as it gradually opens." 1746 Age 43

It is granted that, for Wesley, after this, to fight so tenaciously for the Church of England was inconsistent, but we take him as we find him. Facts are facts; and we shall not attempt to blink them. Having founded churches, or societies as he persisted in calling them, he proceeded to provide and to *ordain*,—yes, to *ordain* for them ministers. He was a clergyman of the episcopal Church of England, with the views of a Dissenter, and, acting accordingly, there was, of course, in his future proceedings, much that was incongruous and perplexing.

Wesley left London for Bristol, on January 20. Two days afterwards, he attended, in the latter city, a conference of the Calvinistic Methodists, at which there were present Howel Harris and eleven of his preachers, and Wesley and four of his. Wesley seems to have been president; at all events, his name stands first. The following are the minutes:—

"After prayer it was inquired:—(1) How we may remove any hindrances of brotherly love which have occurred. (2) How we may prevent any arising hereafter. It was feared that, in consequence of Mr. Wesley's preaching in Neath, there would be a separation in the society. He answered, 'I do not design to erect a society at Neath, or any town in Wales, where there is a society already, but to do all that in me lieth to prevent any such separation.'

"We all agreed that, if we occasionally preached among each other's people, we should endeavour to strengthen and not to weaken each other's hands, and prevent any separation in the several societies; and that a brother from Wesley's society should go with Harris to Plymouth and the west, to heal the breach there made, and to insist on a spirit of love and its fruits among the people. Agreed, that we should, on each side, be careful to defend each other's characters."[1]

This is beautiful, and sets an example worthy of being emulated by the Methodist Conferences of the present day. It was but five or six years since the Methodist schism had happened; and yet, under the magnanimous management of Wesley and Howel Harris, here we find the two parties met, not to fight, but to love each other. Differences are kept up and perpetuated, not by greatness and goodness, but by

[1] "Life and Times of Howel Harris," p. 113.

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despicable ignorance and selfish meanness. Why should Ephraim envy Judah, and Judah vex Ephraim? The two are brothers; and, as brethren, it would be a goodly and pleasant sight to see them *dwelling together* in unity.

Wesley spent a month in Bristol and the neighbourhood; during which period his brother Charles opened a chapel at Wapping;[1] and Wesley himself received the following cautionary letter from a new clerical acquaintance, and, ever afterwards, most confidential and trustworthy friend. Vincent Perronet was now vicar of Shoreham, in the county of Kent. A year and a half before, Wesley and Perronet had been brought together by their mutual friend, the Rev. Henry Piers. Wesley writes: "I hope to have cause of blessing God for ever for the acquaintance begun this day." The hope was realised. Wesley had no more faithful friend than Vincent Perronet, who now wrote as follows:—

"*February* 7, 1746.

"My dear Friend,—I make no apology for this trouble, because I know that you will think it needs none. God hath raised you up to propagate His spiritual kingdom in the hearts of men; therefore, be careful how you frustrate this great design of God. But will you not do this, if you injure your health? Or can you labour in the vineyard of Christ, when your strength is gone? Deny yourself, my dear friend, so far as is consistent with your constant labour; but be cautious lest your self denials should rob God or His children of what you have undertaken for the service of both. Remember, that, if you weaken your body by over mortifications, you render yourself so far incapable of promoting the honour of the former, and the happiness of the latter; and yet I know that each of these is dearer to you than life itself. Let the Holy Spirit's advice, out of the mouth of a mortified apostle, to the abstemious Timothy, be constantly before you.

"I am, with great sincerity, my dear brother in Christ, your most affectionate Vincent Perronet."[2]

At this period, advice like this, in Wesley's case, was not unneeded.

On February 17, when days were short and weather far from favourable, he set out, on horseback, from Bristol to Newcastle, a distance of between three and four hundred miles. The journey occupied ten weary days. Brooks were

[1] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. i., p. 409.
[2] *Methodist Magazine*, 1797, p. 252.

swollen, and, in some places, the roads were impassable, obliging the itinerant to go round about through fields. At Aldridge Heath, in Staffordshire, the rain turned into snow, which the northerly wind drove against him, and by which he was soon crusted over from head to foot. At Leeds, the mob followed him, and pelted him with whatever came to hand. Several of the missiles struck him, some on the face, but none seriously hurt him. At Skircoat Green, he preached to a congregation of Quakers; and at Keighley, found the snow so deep, that he was obliged to abandon his intention of travelling through the dales. He arrived at Newcastle on February 26. 1746 Age 43

Here he found general sickness. Two thousand of the soldiers, belonging to the encampment on the town moor, were already dead, and the fever was still sweeping others away in troops. In Newcastle and its neighbourhood, he spent the next eighteen days, preaching, on one occasion, at Placey, out of doors, in the midst of a "vehement storm," which, however, the preacher and his "congregation regarded not."

While he was here, a letter was published in the *London Magazine*, addressed "to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, in relation to some false facts affirmed by him in his Farther Appeal." A passage was quoted in reference to the clergy putting no difference between the holy and profane at the sacramental table; and it was declared, that the quotation "contains almost as many falsehoods as it does lines." Wesley is further accused of "gross misrepresentations and uncharitable reflections"; of being "base, unjust, and senseless"; of "crowding a heap of untruths into a little room"; of being animated by "a blind and rash zeal, and glad to catch at every pretence of making God the patron and favourer of his cause."

A production so bitterly scurrilous scarcely deserved an answer; but, as Wesley was slightly in error, he, like an honest man, frankly confessed it. The following is his reply, published in the same periodical.

"*June* 18, 1746.

"SIR,—I delayed answering your letter of March 18, till I could be fully informed of the facts in question.

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"I said in the Farther Appeal, page 48, 'Who dares repel one of the greatest men in his parish from the Lord's table, even though he openly deny the Lord that bought him? Mr. Stonehouse did this once; but what was the event? The gentleman brought an action against him. And who was able and willing to espouse his cause? He alone who took it into His own hands; and, before the day when it should have been tried here, caused the plaintiff to answer at a higher bar.'

"You (1) blame me for supposing that gentleman to be one who openly denied the Lord that bought him; I mean, openly denied the supreme Godhead of Christ. If he did not, I retract the charge.

"You say (2) that gentleman brought no action, nor commenced any suit against Mr. Stonehouse. Upon stricter inquiry, I find he did not; it was another gentleman, Mr. C—p—r.

"You (3) observe, it was not the death of the plaintiff which stopped the action; but before it proceeded to a trial, Mr. Stonehouse thought fit to request it as a favour, that the action might be stopped, promising not to do the like any more. Mr. Stonehouse himself gives a different account; but whether his or yours be the more just, is not material, since the substance of what you observe is true, namely, 'That it was not the plaintiff's death which stopped the action.'

"You add, 'I would willingly hope, that you did not deliberately design to impose upon the world.' I did not; and do, therefore, acknowledge the truth in as public a manner as I am able, being willing, as far as in me lies, to make amends for whatever injury I have done.

"I am, sir, yours,
"JOHN WESLEY."

In the same month of March, another letter, of a different complexion, was published in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. The writer begins by showing, that the years 48 and 88, in the last two centuries, at least, if not longer, had been noted for great changes and revolutions. Thus, in 1548, the Reformation was first completely established in England; and, in 1588, the famous pretended invincible Spanish Armada made its futile attempt to destroy the Protestantism of Great Britain. In 1648, King Charles was condemned to death, and the gravest changes followed; and, in 1688, occurred the flight of the last of the Stuart kings, and the English Revolution.

The writer then proceeds to ask, whether there is not something remarkable "in the revival of the Moravians very nearly about the same time with the rise of the Methodists in England; and of a sect of the same kind in Scotland, by the field preaching of Erskine and others; and of exactly the same in Wales by the preaching of Howel Harris; and

of something of the same nature in France, where the principal preacher concerned had been executed by the royal will and pleasure. Is there not," the writer continues, "something very surprising in all these peoples' rising about the same time, and preaching, all of them, the same doctrines, and yet all of them, and all their several intentions of so doing, being previously unknown to each other?" 1746 Age 43

The above coincidence was more than curious, and the author of the letter suggests, that such facts and others, which he mentions, may be "the dawning of some important religious change, or, at least, of something very extraordinary, which the sacred womb of providence is big with."

At the same time as the above, Wesley was engaged in an important correspondence of another kind. Dr. Doddridge was exactly a year older than his illustrious Methodist contemporary, was the pastor of a Dissenting congregation at Northampton, and the principal of an academy for the education of candidates for the Dissenting ministry. Up to the present, Wesley had chiefly lived within the state-church enclosure; but now, having become a convert to the principles of Lord King, he overstepped the enchanted circle, and thought it no disgrace to commune and mingle with Dissenters. Methodist preachers were multiplying. Few of them had had the advantages of education and of reading. Their knowledge, generally speaking, was confined to the first principles of religion. These were the only subjects on which they either did, or were able to converse. Of necessity, their preaching was solely on the fundamental points of experimental and practical religion; and hence, their unequalled success in awakening and converting sinners. Preachers of education and diversified knowledge would, perhaps, not have excluded these; but they would, to a large extent, have regaled their hearers with other truths, which, though of great interest, were insignificant in point of importance when compared with the few great and grand cardinal doctrines which formed the staple of all the sermons of Wesley's first itinerants. The effect of this unadorned preaching of the greatest of all verities was surprising. Under these untutored discourses, people found themselves emerging out of thick darkness into light, which St. Peter aptly describes as "*mar-*

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vellous." These were glorious results, and almost make one wish, that among the cultivated and captivating preachers of the present day, who can discourse most eloquently upon any subject, from Eve's figleaves up to Aaron's wardrobe, or from the architecture of Noah's ark down to the whale that swallowed Jonah, there were a sprinkling of men whose preaching powers, like those of Wesley's first helpers, were confined to an incessant utterance, in burning though somewhat boorish words, of the glorious old truths now-a-days too much neglected,—Repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, followed by the fruits of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. If sinners are to be converted, these are the doctrines which *must* be preached. Other doctrines and truths may be interesting, useful, and instructive; these are absolutely *saving* and *essential.*

Wesley was devoutly thankful for his uneducated but soul saving preachers. Still, he saw that, as the Methodists increased in knowledge, the preachers must keep pace with them. Without this, though they might still be as successful as ever in converting ignorant and rude sinners, they would be in danger of being neglected and even despised by those who, in consequence of conversion, had been greatly raised, in both an intellectual and social sense, above their neighbours. In short, Wesley felt convinced that his preachers must not only preach but read; and being persuaded, as a sort of clerical Dissenter, that good things might be found even in Dissenting Nazareths, he wrote to the most distinguished of all Dissenters then existing, to make inquiry. Six months before, he had called on Doddridge and had addressed his students; now, at Newcastle, in March, 1746, he addressed to him a letter, the nature of which may be gathered from Doddridge's answer.

"*March* 15, 1746.

"I am grieved and ashamed, that any hurry, public or private, should have prevented my answering your obliging letter from Newcastle; especially as it has a face of disrespect, where I ought to express the very reverse, if I would do justice either to you, or my own heart. But you have been used to forgive greater injuries. I have unwillingly a guardianship affair on hand, on account of which, I must beg your patience for a little longer, as to the list of books you desire me to send you. I presume the list you desire is chiefly theological. Perhaps my desire of making

it too particular has hindered me from setting about it. But, if God permit, you shall be sure to have it in a few weeks. 1746 Age 43

"Let me know how you do, what your success is, and what your apprehensions are. I fear we must have some hot flame to melt us. Remember in your prayers,

"Reverend and dear sir,
"Your affectionate brother and servant,
"P. DODDRIDGE."[1]

Three months later, Doddridge's promise was fulfilled, in a long letter, almost a little pamphlet, dated Northampton, June 18, 1746. He writes—

"REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—I set myself down, as well as I can, to discharge my promise, and fulfil your request, in giving my thoughts on that little collection of books, which you seem desirous to make for some of your young preachers."

Then follow his recommendations, which we give in brief:—

Logic—Carmichael, and Dr. Watts.
Metaphysics—De Urce, Dr. Watts, and Le Clerc.
Ethics—Puffendorf, and Hutcheson.
Jewish Antiquities—Lewis, Reland, Calmet, and Prideaux.
Civil History—Puffendorf, Turselme, and Lampe.
Natural Philosophy—Rowning, Ray, Cotton Mather, and Derham.
Astronomy—Watts, Jennings, and Wells.
Natural and Revealed Religion—Carmichael, Synge, Clarke, Gibson, Doddridge, Jefferies, Bullock, Conybeare, Leland, and Chandler.

He next proceeds to the chief subject, practical divinity, which he thinks "ought to employ the greatest part of the care of every preacher," and adds:—

"I will not presume, sir, to mention to you the divines of the Established Church; but as I may reasonably conclude, that the Puritans and the divines of the separation are less known to you, you will pardon me, if I mention a few of them, and of the chief pieces."

Then he gives the names of Bolton, Hall, Reynolds, Sibbes, Ward, Jackson, Owen, Goodwin, Baxter, Bates, Flavel, Taylor, and Howe. He continues:—

"In recommending the writings of the Dissenters of the present age, I

[1] Whitehead's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 206.

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would be more sparing ; yet permit me to mention Evans, Wright, Watts, Henry, Boyce, Bennett, Jennings, and Grosvenor. And here, dear sir, I thought to have concluded my letter ; but it occurs to my mind, that I have said nothing of commentators. I have recommended to my pupils Beza, Erasmus, Castellio, Heinsius, Patrick, Lowth, Locke, Pierce, Benson, Ainsworth, Hammond, Grotius, Brennius, Wells, Calvin, Poole, Le Clerc, and Cradock. I might mention several considerable writers, that illustrate Scripture, though not direct commentators, such as Witsius, Saurin, Glassius, Gataker, Frankius, Knatchbull, Blackwall, Lightfoot, Calmet, Mede, Hallet, Edwards, Le Crene, Wolsius, Raphelius, Vitringa, Boss, Elsner, and Lardner. But as the critical study of Scripture is not so much intended in your plan, perhaps you will think I have gone a little out of the way in mentioning so many upon this head.

"I am afraid I have by this time thoroughly wearied you. It only remains, that I most cordially recommend you and your labours to the continued presence and blessing of God, and subscribe myself, reverend and dear sir, your most affectionate brother, and faithful humble servant,

"P. DODDRIDGE."[1]

We return to Wesley. Accompanied by two of his preachers, John Downes, and William Shepherd, he started from Newcastle for the south, on the 17th of March. When they had ridden between forty and fifty miles, Downes was so ill that he was unable to proceed farther ; and Wesley's horse was so lame, that it could scarcely walk. Wesley writes :— "By riding thus seven miles, I was thoroughly tired, and my head ached more than it had done for months. I then thought, 'cannot God heal either man or beast, by any means, or without any ?' Immediately, my weariness and headache ceased, and my horse's lameness in the same instant. Nor did he halt any more either that day or the next. I here aver a naked fact ; let every man account for it as he sees good."

Coming to Nottingham, he says : "I had long doubted what it was which hindered the work of God here. But, upon inquiry, the case was plain. So many of the society were either triflers or disorderly walkers, that the blessing of God could not rest upon them ; so I made short work, cutting off all such at a stroke, and leaving only a little handful, who, as far as can be judged, were really in earnest to save their souls."

At Wednesbury and Birmingham, the antinomian teachers

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1778, p. 419.

had laboured hard to corrupt the Methodists. One came to Wesley at Birmingham, and the following colloquy ensued :— 1746 Age 43

Wesley. "Do you believe you have nothing to do with the law of God?"
Antinomian. "I have not: I am not under the law; I live by faith."
W. "Have you, as living by faith, a right to everything in the world?"
A. "I have: all is mine, since Christ is mine."
W. "May you then take anything you will anywhere—suppose out of a shop, without the consent or knowledge of the owner?"
A. "I may, if I want it; for it is mine: only I will not give offence."
W. "Have you also a right to all the women in the world?"
A. "Yes, if they consent."
W. "And is not that a sin?"
A. "Yes, to him that thinks it is a sin; but not to those whose hearts are free."

Horrible! No wonder, that Wesley wrote tracts against antinomian teachers; and no wonder he adds, "Surely these are the firstborn children of Satan!"

Wesley reached Bristol on March 27; and, eleven days afterwards, laid "the first stone of the new house at Kingswood;" preaching, on the occasion, from the words, "For brass I will bring gold," etc. (Isaiah lx. 17–22.)

He then hurried up to London, where in company with his friend, the Rev. H. Piers, he visited a man who called himself a prophet. Wesley says: "We were with him about an hour. But I could not at all think, that he was sent of God: 1. Because he appeared to be full of himself, vain, heady, and opinionated. 2. Because he spoke with extreme bitterness, both of the king, and of all the bishops, and all the clergy. 3. Because he aimed at talking Latin, but could not."

Having spent three weeks in London, Wesley, on the 4th of May, again set out for Bristol; but on the 17th was back to London. Here his first business was to settle the chapels in Bristol, Kingswood, and Newcastle upon seven trustees, reserving only to himself and his brother, as he says, the liberty of preaching and lodging there. This, however, was scarcely correct, so far at least as Newcastle was concerned, and as the following synopsis of the trust deed will show. The seven trustees, for the Orphan House there, were Henry Jackson, weaver, and William Mackford, corndealer, both of Newcastle; John Nelson, mason, of Birstal; John Haughton, weaver, of Chinley End; Thomas Richards, late of Trinity

1746 Age 43 College, Oxford; Jonathan Reeves, baker, late of Bristol; and Henry Thornton, gentleman, of Grays Inn, London. The trusts were:—1. That Wesley and his brother should have the free use of the premises, and likewise any person or persons whom they might nominate or appoint during their lifetime. 2. That, after the death of the two Wesleys, the trustees should monthly or oftener nominate and appoint one or more fit person or persons to preach in the said house, in the same manner, as near as may be, as God's holy word was preached at present. 3. That a school should be taught on the said premises, consisting of forty poor children, to be selected by Wesley and his brother during their respective lives, and, after their death, by the trustees. 4. That when, by any cause, the trustees were reduced to three, they should fill up the vacancies, and make the number seven. 5. That, during their lifetime, the two Wesleys should have the sole appointment and removal of the masters and mistresses of the school. 6. That every preacher or minister, appointed to the Orphan House, should, as long as the appointment lasted, preach in the said house every morning and every evening, as had been usual and customary to be done.[1]

Southey has fallen into an error as to the settlement of chapels. He writes:—"Whenever a chapel was built, care was taken, that the property should be vested, not in trustees, but in Mr. Wesley and the Conference." This is incorrect. From the first, the property of Methodist chapels was always vested in trustees. It is true, that Wesley reserved to himself the right of preaching in such chapels, and of appointing others to preach therein; but, as Mr. Watson observes, neither he nor the Conference had any more "property in the best secured chapels, than in the poet laureate's butt of sack." Wesley was glad to divest himself of such property, and to put it into the hands of others. A year afterwards, he writes: 1747, March 19—"I considered, 'what would I do now, if I was sure I had but two days to live?' All outward things are settled to my wish; the houses at Bristol, Kingswood, and Newcastle are safe; the deeds, whereby they are

[1] Stamp's "Orphan House."

conveyed to the trustees, took place on the 5th instant; my will is made; what have I more to do, but to commend my soul to my merciful and faithful Creator?" 1746 Age 43

Having made arrangements in London for the settlement of his chapels, Wesley turned his attention to another subject, upon which opinions will differ. The number of members in the London society, on the 12th of April, 1746, was 1939, and the amount of their quarterly contributions £113 9*s.*,[1] upon an average, fourteen pence per member. Considering the high price of money, and that nearly the whole of the London Methodists were extremely poor, the amount subscribed was highly creditable. Wesley, however, needed more than this, not for himself but others, and propounded a somewhat novel plan for raising it.

Tea was a costly luxury. It was first imported into England about the year 1660, when an act of parliament was passed, imposing a duty of eightpence on every gallon of the infusion sold in coffee houses. In 1664, the East India Company bought two pounds two ounces as a royal present to his majesty King Charles II. It continued to be sold in London for sixty shillings per pound till the year 1707; and, though considerably cheaper in 1746, it was still a dear indulgence. Wesley also believed its use to be injurious.

He tells us that, when he first went to Oxford, with an exceeding good constitution, and being otherwise in health, he was somewhat surprised at certain symptoms of a paralytic disorder. His hand shook, especially after breakfast; but he soon observed that, if for two or three days he intermitted drinking tea, the shaking ceased. Upon inquiry, he found tea had the same effect on others, and particularly on persons whose nerves were weak. This led him to lessen the quantity he took, and to drink it weaker; but still, for above six and twenty years, he was more or less subject to the same disorder.

In July, 1746, he began to observe, that abundance of the people of London were similarly affected, some of them having their nerves unstrung, and their bodily strength de-

[1] Wesley's unpublished journal.

1746 Age 43 cayed. He asked them if they were hard drinkers; they replied, "No, indeed, we drink scarce anything but a little tea, morning and night." He says:

"I immediately remembered my own case, and easily gathered, from many concurring circumstances, that it was the same case with them. I considered, 'what an advantage would it be to these poor enfeebled people, if they would leave off what so manifestly impairs their health, and thereby hurts their business also! If they used English herbs instead of tea, they might, hereby, not only lessen their pain, but in some degree their poverty. How much might be saved in so numerous a body as the Methodists, even in this single article of expense! And how greatly is all that can possibly be saved, in every article, wanted daily by those who have not even food convenient for them! Some of the Methodists had not food to sustain nature; some were destitute of necessary clothing; and some had not where to lay their heads. The little weekly contributions were barely sufficient to relieve the sick.' I reflected 'what might be done, if ten thousand, or one thousand, or only five hundred, would save all they could in this single instance, and put their savings into the poor-box weekly, to feed the hungry, and to clothe the naked!' I thought further: 'many tell me to my face, I can persuade this people to anything. I will make a fair trial. If I can persuade any number, many who are now weak or sick will be restored to health and strength; many will pay those debts which others, perhaps equally poor, can but ill afford to lose; many will be less straitened in their own families; many, by helping their neighbour, will lay up for themselves treasures in heaven.' Immediately it struck me, 'but example must go before precept; therefore, I must not plead an exemption for myself, from a daily practice of twenty-seven years: I must begin.' I did so; the three first days my head ached, more or less, all day long, and I was half asleep from morning to night. The third day, my memory failed, almost entirely. In the evening, I sought my remedy in prayer; and next morning my headache was gone, and my memory as strong as ever. And I have found no inconvenience, but a sensible benefit, in several respects, from that day to this. My paralytic complaints are all gone; my hand is as steady now (1748) as it was at fifteen; and so considerable a difference do I find in my expense, that, in only those four families at London, Bristol, Kingswood, and Newcastle, I save upwards of fifty pounds a year."

Having set the example, Wesley recommended the same abstinence to a few of his preachers; and, a week later, to about a hundred of his people whom he believed to be strong in faith; all of whom, with two or three exceptions, resolved, by the grace of God, to make the trial without delay. In a short time, he proposed it to the whole society. Objections rose in abundance. Some said, "Tea is not unwholesome at

all." To these, he replied that many eminent physicians had declared it was; and that, if frequently used by those of weak nerves, it is no other than a slow poison. Others said, "Tea is not unwholesome to me: why then should I leave it off?" Wesley answered, "To give an example to those to whom it is undeniably prejudicial, and to have the more wherewith to feed the hungry and to clothe the naked." Others said, "It helps my health; nothing else will agree with me." To such, Wesley's caustic reply was, "I suppose your body is much of the same kind with that of your great grandmother; and do you think nothing else agreed with her, or with any of her progenitors? What poor, puling, sickly things, must all the English then have been, till within these hundred years! Besides, if, in fact, nothing else will agree with you,—if tea has already weakened your stomach, and impaired your digestion to such a degree, it has hurt you more than you are aware. You have need to abhor it as deadly poison, and to renounce it from this very hour."[1] 1746 Age 43

What was the result of Wesley's attempt to form a *tea*-total society? We can hardly tell; except that he himself abstained from tea for the next twelve years, until Dr. Fothergill ordered him to resume its use.[2] Charles Wesley began to abstain, but how long his abstinence lasted we are not informed. About a hundred of the London Methodists followed the example of their leader; and, besides these, a large number of others began to be *temperate*, and to use less than they had previously.[3]

This was, to say the least, an amusing episode in Wesley's laborious life. All must give him credit for the best and most benevolent intentions; and it is right to add, that, ten days after his proposal was submitted to the London society, he had collected among his friends thirty pounds for "a lending stock," and that this was soon made up to fifty, by means of which, before the year was ended, above two hundred and fifty destitute persons had received acceptable relief.

On July 20, Wesley set out for Bristol, where he spent the next fortnight. While here he paid a visit to Oakhill, near

[1] Ibid. vol. xi., p. 483. [2] Ibid. vol. x., p. 379.
[3] Ibid. vol. xi., p. 489.

1746 Age 43 Shepton Mallet, where "the good curate" hired a drunken mob to make disturbance. As soon as Wesley began preaching, the "drunken champions" began "screaming out a psalm"; but Wesley says, "our singing quickly swallowed up theirs. Soon after, their orator named a text, and preached a sermon; his attendants meantime being busy in throwing stones and dirt" at Wesley's congregation.

On August 10, Wesley went to Wales. He preached in Builth churchyard to nearly all the inhabitants that the town contained. At Maesmennys, Lanzufried, and Wenvo, he preached in the parish churches; and at Cardiff in the castle yard. At Neath, he found twelve young men whom, he says, he almost envied. They lived together in one house, and gave away whatever they earned above the necessaries of life. Most of them were predestinarians, but so little bigoted to their opinions, that they would not suffer a predestinarian to preach among them, unless he would avoid controversy. Here Wesley preached in the open street, a gentleman and a drunken fiddler doing their best to interrupt his service; but, none joining them, they were soon ashamed, and the gentleman slunk away on one side, and the fiddler on the other. At Margam, he had to have a Welsh interpreter; and at Leominster (to which he went during his tour), he began preaching on a tombstone, on the south side of the parish church, but was not allowed to finish. The mob "roared on every side"; the bells were set a ringing; and then the organ began to play amain. Wesley's voice was drowned, and hence he thought it advisable to remove to the corn market, where he had a "quiet time," and "showed what that sect is, which is 'everywhere spoken against.'"

Returning to Bristol, he started, on September 1, for Cornwall. At St. Just, he found the liveliest society in the county, and yet a few of the members he was "obliged to reprove for negligence in meeting, which," says he, "is always the forerunner of greater evils." At Sithney, he preached by moonlight; and, at Gwennap, to an "immense multitude," a funeral sermon for Thomas Hitchins, from, "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

Having spent a fortnight among the Cornish Methodists, he set out, on the 16th of September, for London, his brother

meeting him at Uxbridge, and becoming his escort to the capital.[1] 1746 Age 43

After a week in London, he paid a visit to his friend Perronet, preaching, on the way, at Sevenoaks, "to a large, wild company," one of whom cursed him bitterly. At Shoreham, he preached twice in Perronet's church; but says, "the congregation seemed to understand just nothing of the matter." The rest of the year was spent in the metropolis.

It has been already stated, that Wesley, for conscience sake, was now an abstainer from tea. Before the year expired, he went a step further. He writes: December 29—"I resumed my vegetable diet (which I had now discontinued for several years), and found it of use both to my soul and body; but, after two years, a violent flux, which seized me in Ireland, obliged me to return to the use of animal food."

Whatever may be thought about the wisdom of a man, of such active habits, adopting such an abstemious, anchorite sort of diet, there can be no question about the fact, that his motives were of the highest and purest kind. He gave up tea, that he might benefit the poor; and, contemporaneously with his resumption of a vegetable diet, he commenced an institution, which, to say the least, was not then so popular and so common as it is at present. He writes: "I mentioned my design of giving physic to the poor. In three weeks about three hundred came." Such is the entry in his Journal.

He had already provided a fund for relieving the necessities of the poor by furnishing them with food and clothing; but something more was requisite. Many of them were sick; their sufferings stirred his sympathy; and yet he knew not how to help them. "At length," he says, "I thought of a kind of desperate expedient: 'I will prepare and give them physic myself.' For six or seven and twenty years, I had made anatomy and physic the diversion of my leisure hours; though I never properly studied them, unless for a few months when I was going to America, where I imagined I might be of some service to those who had no regular phy-

[1] C. Wesley's Journal.

1746 Age 43 sician among them. I applied to it again. I took into my assistance an apothecary, and an experienced surgeon; resolving, at the same time, not to go out of my depth, but to leave all difficult and complicated cases to such physicians as the patients should choose. I gave notice of this to the society; and, in five months, medicines were occasionally given to above five hundred persons. Several of these I never saw before; for I did not regard whether they were of the society or not. In that time, seventy-one of these, regularly taking their medicines, and following the regimen prescribed (which three in four would not do), were entirely cured of distempers long thought to be incurable. The whole expense of medicines, during this time, was nearly forty pounds."[1]

This was a bold step, and exposed Wesley to animadversion. He was not a legally qualified medical practitioner, and there were not wanting those who were ready to brand him as a quack. His defence was, that the poor were neglected; that physicians were often useless; and that his own gratuitous treatment was successful. In a letter, published in the *Bath Journal*, in 1749, he writes: "I do not know that any one patient yet has died under my hands. If any person does, let him declare it, with the time and circumstances."[2] And, in another letter addressed to Archbishop Secker, in 1747, four months after his dispensary was opened, he remarks:—

"For more than twenty years, I have had numberless proofs, that regular physicians do exceeding little good. From a deep conviction of this, I have believed it my duty, within these four months last past, to prescribe such medicines to six or seven hundred of the poor as I knew were proper for their several disorders. Within six weeks, nine in ten of them, who had taken these medicines, were remarkably altered for the better; and many were cured of disorders under which they had laboured for ten, twenty, forty years. Now, ought I to have let one of these poor wretches perish, because I was not a regular physician? to have said, 'I know what will cure you; but I am not of the college; you must send for Dr. Mead'? Before Dr. Mead had come in his chariot, the man might have been in his coffin. And when the doctor was come, where was his fee? What! he cannot live upon nothing!

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. viii., p. 254. [2] Ibid vol. viii., p. 495.

So, instead of an orderly cure, the patient dies; and God requires his blood at my hands."[1] 1746 Age 43

It was difficult to answer this, and Wesley was not the man to be browbeaten from the path of duty by envious and angry members of the healing profession. Indeed, his success was such, that, within two months after opening his dispensary at the Foundery in London, he instituted a second in Bristol, and writing to his friend and patron, Mr. Ebenezer Blackwell, says, "Our number of patients increases in Bristol daily. We have now upwards of two hundred. Many have already desired to return thanks, having found a considerable change for the better already. But we are at a great loss for medicines; several of those we should choose being not to be had at any price in Bristol."[2]

There are only two other matters, belonging to the year 1746, which require attention; namely, Wesley's conference, and Wesley's publications.

The conference commenced in Bristol on the 12th of May, and lasted four days.[3] Four clergymen were present—the two Wesleys, and Messrs. Hodges and Taylor. Besides these, there were four itinerants, Messrs. Reeves, Maxfield, Westall, and Willis; and also Thomas Glascot, of whom we know nothing. As at former conferences, so at this, doctrines were reviewed, and carefully guarded against error and abuse; and, after this, points of discipline were discussed and settled. It was agreed, that "the properest persons to be present," at the annual conferences, were—1. The preachers. 2. The most earnest and most sensible of the bandleaders living in the town where the conference was held. 3. Any pious and judicious stranger who might be visiting the place. It was thought, that it might be useful to read one or more of Wesley's tracts at each conference, were it only to correct errors, or to explain obscurities. Wesley's helpers were defined to be "extraordinary messengers, designed of God to provoke the others to jealousy." It was resolved, that those who believed themselves to be called of God to preach should be strictly examined on the

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 83. [2] Ibid. vol. xii., p. 155.
[3] C. Wesley's Journal, vol. i., p. 414.

1746 Age 43 three points, Have they grace, gifts, and fruit? and that those in whom these three marks undeniably concurred should be allowed to have such a call. It was thought that, at present, they were not preaching the atonement so much as they did at first; and that the sermons which were attended with the greatest blessing, were—"1. Such as were most close, convincing, particular. 2. Such as had most of Christ, the Priest, the Atonement. 3. Such as urged the heinousness of men's living in contempt or ignorance of Him." It was determined, that a sufficient call of Providence to a new place was an invitation from some worthy person, and a probability of doing more good by going thither, than by staying longer where they were. New members were to be admitted into the bands and societies only once a quarter, their names having been previously read at meetings of the existing members; and, at the same time, had to be read the names of those excluded from the society. Directions were given to guard against formality in public singing. Efforts were to be employed to induce the people to attend the church; and, as an example to the Bristol Methodists, it was agreed, that the Bristol preachers should go to St. James's church every Wednesday and Friday. The country was divided into seven circuits, namely—1. London, including Brentford, Egham, Windsor, Wycombe, and the three counties of Surrey, Kent, and Essex. 2. Bristol, including the isle of Portland, and the counties of Somerset, Wilts, Oxford, and Gloucester. 3. Cornwall. 4. Evesham, embracing Shrewsbury, Leominster, Hereford, and all the places from Stroud to Wednesbury. 5. Yorkshire, to which was to be attached the six counties of Cheshire, Lancashire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Rutlandshire, and Lincolnshire. 6. Newcastle. 7. Wales. The present assistants were Reeves, Bennet, Haughton, Nelson, Wheatley, Trembath, Westall, Richards, Downes, Meyrick, Maxfield, and Walker. And to these, perhaps, would be added, Jones, Larwood, and Cownley. Copies of the minutes of the conferences were to be given only to those who were or might have been present; but they were to be read to the stewards and leaders of bands, the Sunday and Thursday following each conference.

Such is a synopsis of the proceedings of the conference of 1746. 1746 — Age 43

Notwithstanding Wesley's almost incessant travelling and preaching, he still found time to write. Two of his publications, in 1746, were partly his own, but principally his brother's.

First: "Hymns for those that seek, and those that have, Redemption in the Blood of Jesus Christ." 12mo, 68 pages. Twenty-eight of these hymns are inserted in the Wesleyan Hymn-Book, and are among the finest that the book contains. One of them, evidently written by Wesley himself, begins with the line, "How happy is the pilgrim's lot;" and though two or three of the verses are not suitable for a mixed congregation to sing, the whole is strikingly descriptive of Wesley's own condition and experience. He had no wife, and no children, and had just transferred his chapels to trustees, and, hence, could sing what many in Methodist congregations cannot.

"I have no babes to hold me here;
But children more securely dear
For mine I humbly claim;
Better than daughters or than sons,
Temples Divine of living stones,
Inscribed with Jesu's name.

No foot of land do I possess,
No cottage in this wilderness;
A poor, wayfaring man,
I lodge awhile in tents below;
Or gladly wander to and fro,
Till I my Canaan gain.

I have no sharer of my heart,
To rob my Saviour of a part,
And desecrate the whole;
Only betrothed to Christ am I,
And wait His coming from the sky,
To wed my happy soul.

Nothing on earth I call my own,
A stranger, to the world unknown,
All their goods despise;
I trample on their whole delight,
And seek a country out of sight,
A country in the skies."

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Second.] The other joint publication was, "Hymns of Petition and Thanksgiving for the Promise of the Father." By John and Charles Wesley. 12mo, 36 pages. These were thirty-two in number, and were specially intended for use at Whitsuntide. Several of the best of them are in the Methodist Hymn-Book.[1]

Wesley's other publications were the following:—

1. "A Word of Advice to Saints and Sinners." 12mo, 12 pages.

2. "Lessons for Children. Part I." 12mo, 76 pages; with a vignette on the title-page of an angel on clouds, with a scroll in one hand, and a trumpet in the other. The lessons are fifty-four in number, and are almost entirely taken from the five books of Moses. Prefixed is an address "to all parents and schoolmasters," in which Wesley says:—

> "I have endeavoured in the following lessons to select the plainest and most useful portions of Scripture; such as children may the most easily understand, and such as it most concerns them to know. These are set down in the same order, and generally in the same words, wherein they are delivered by the Spirit of God. Where an expression is less easy to be understood, I have subjoined a word or two by way of explication. I cannot but earnestly entreat you, to take good heed, how you teach these deep things of God. Beware of that common, but accursed way, of making children parrots, instead of Christians. Regard not *how much*, but to how good purpose they read. Turn each sentence every way, propose it in every light, and question them continually on every point."

3. In the month of March, the Rev. Thomas Church, vicar of Battersea, published another two shilling pamphlet, entitled, "Some further Remarks on Mr. Wesley's last Journal;"[2] and, in July,[3] Wesley issued, "The Principles of a Methodist farther explained; occasioned by the Reverend Mr. Church's second letter to Mr. Wesley; in a second letter to that gentleman." 12mo, 79 pages. First of all, Wesley takes up the case

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[1] Other hymns were published in 1746: as, "Hymns for our Lord's Resurrection;" "Hymns for Ascension Day;" "Hymns to the Trinity;" "Graces before and after Meat;" "Hymns for the Watchnight;" "Hymns for the Public Thanksgiving Day;" "Funeral Hymns;" and "Hymns on the Great Festivals;" but it is impossible to determine how many of these were written by Wesley himself, and how many by his brother.

[2] *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1746, p. 223. [3] Ibid. p. 388.

of the Moravians; and then explains his views of justification and of the faith and repentance preceding it. Next he vindicates himself against the charge of violating the discipline of the Church of England, and of his being an enthusiast. He declares his belief, that, in points of importance, when the reasons brought on each side appear to be of equal weight, it is right to decide the question by casting lots; that there are still such persons as demoniacs, and will be such as long as Satan is the god of this world; and that there is nothing either in the Old Testament or the New which teaches, that "miracles were to be confined within the limits of the apostolic or the Cyprianic age, or, that God hath in any way precluded Himself from working miracles, in any kind or degree, in any age to the end of time." The pamphlet must be read to be appreciated. It is *multum in parvo*. 1746 Age 43

In November, Wesley, for the first time, published a *volume* of sermons, price, in sheets, half-a-crown.[1] The title was, "Sermons on Several Occasions"; and the book is the first of the *four volumes of sermons*, which, with the Notes on the New Testament, were afterwards constituted the perpetual standard of Methodist theology. These are so widely and so well known that further description is unneeded. The preface, however, deserves notice. It states that the sermons contain the substance of what Wesley had been preaching during the last eight years; and, that there was no point of doctrine, on which he had been accustomed to speak in public, which was not here, incidentally, if not professedly, laid before the reader. Wesley adds:—

"Nothing here appears in an elaborate, elegant, or oratorical dress. If it had been my desire or design to write thus, my leisure would not permit. But, in truth, I, at present, designed nothing less; for I now write, as I generally speak, *ad populum*. I design plain truth for plain people; therefore, of set purpose, I abstain from all nice and philosophical speculations; from all perplexed and intricate reasonings; and, as far as possible, from even the show of learning, unless in sometimes citing the original Scripture. I have thought, I am a creature of a day. I am a spirit come from God, and returning to God. I want to know one thing,—the way to heaven. God Himself has condescended to teach me the way. He hath written it down in a book. O give me that book! At

[1] *London Magazine*, 1746, p. 594.

1746 Age 43 any price, give me the book of God! I have it; here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be *homo unius libri.* Here then I am, far from the busy ways of men. I sit down alone: only God is here. In His presence, I read His book; for this end, to find the way to heaven. Is there a doubt concerning the meaning of what I read? I lift up my heart to the Father of lights, and ask Him to let me know His will. I then search after and consider parallel passages of Scripture. I meditate thereon with all the attention and earnestness of which my mind is capable. If any doubt still remains, I consult those who are experienced in the things of God; and then the writings whereby, being dead, they yet speak. And what I thus learn, that I teach."

This is very beautiful. Wesley was no copyist. He owed his theology to no class of theologians, either ancient or modern,—Moravian or otherwise. Peter Bohler and others might suggest truths like the grand old doctrine of salvation by faith only; but before adopting them Wesley went to the only pure fount of theology existing, and deduced his creed, not from Bohler's notions, but from the book of God. His belief was thus founded upon a rock, and he felt it so. He declares, that his mind is open to conviction; but, at the same time, he was conscious that he had, not only human, but Divine authority for what he taught. Let all divinity students copy his example.

Wesley's last publication, in 1746, was Parts II. and III. of his "Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion." 12mo, 139 pages. In some respects, this was one of the severest works that Wesley ever committed to the press. With terrible power, he depicts the wickedness of the nation,—forgetfulness of God and neglect of His holy ordinances, swearing, perjury, sabbath breaking, drunkenness, lasciviousness, speaking evil of dignities, and robbery. Attorneys are lashed as being, in some instances, less honest than pickpockets; and the way in which they whipped money out of their clients' purses is so described, that an unjust lawyer by whom Wesley himself had been victimised sent him back half the amount he had extorted from him. The guardians of public charities are charged with sacrilege. Lying was one of the fashions of the day; and language was swollen with compliment. Pride was rampant; and even cobblers, in London, thought themselves wiser than secretaries of state, and coffee house disputers abler

divines than archbishops. Prisons were schools of vice, out of which prisoners emerged fitted for any kind or degree of villainy, perfectly brutal and devilish, thoroughly furnished for every evil word and work. In the army, profanity was fearful. In the navy, almost every man-of-war was a floating hell. The clergy were not free from the taint of lewdness and drunkenness, from covetousness and idleness, from neglecting the poor and flattering the rich. Presbyterians, in many instances, kept a conscience void of offence, but they had among them drunkards, gluttons, dishonest dealers, and extortioners. Baptists were far from being faultless. Quakers affected great sanctity and simplicity, and yet many of their women wore gold upon their very feet, and their men might be seen with glittering canes and snuff-boxes, even in their solemn assemblies; their female members were too strict to lay out a shilling in a necklace, but not too strict to lay out fourscore guineas in a repeating watch; in one kind of apron or handkerchief they durst not expend twenty shillings, but in another sort would expend twenty pounds; they declined to touch a coloured ribbon, but would cover themselves from head to foot in costly silk. Papists, Jews, and infidels are castigated with equal severity; and with them the second part of the Appeal concludes. 1746 Age 43

The third Part commences with an account of the present revival of religion, and of the brutal persecutions with which it had been assailed. Then objections are answered. Wesley states, that he has seven thousand persons in his societies, whose souls he could not neglect without endangering his own salvation. He shows the difference between other reformations of the church, and that with which he and his contemporaries were identified, and concludes thus:—

"The difference is wide between our case and the case of any of those above mentioned. They *avowedly separated* from the church; we utterly *disavow* any such design. They severely, and almost continually, inveighed against the *doctrines* and *discipline* of the church they left; we approve both the *doctrines* and *discipline* of our church, and inveigh only against *ungodliness* and *unrighteousness*. They spent great part of their time and strength in contending about externals and circumstantials; we agree with you in both; so that having no room to spend any time in such contentions, we have one desire of spending and being spent, in promoting plain, *practical religion*."

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It is impossible, in a brief summary like this, to give an adequate idea of these "Appeals," the best defence of Methodism extant. They are among the most elaborate of Wesley's productions; giving a melancholy view of the low state of religion and of public morals, when he and his brother Methodists entered upon their extraordinary career of ministerial labour; and containing a triumphant vindication of their doctrines and proceedings. They all are pervaded with a spirit of great seriousness, and display a mind deeply affected by the sins and follies of mankind.

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FOR a moment, let us look at Whitefield, who spent the year 1747 in America. Wesley had written him on the subject of union; to which he replied on the 11th of September, as follows:—

"DEAR AND REVEREND SIR,—Not long ago I received your kind letter, dated in February last. My heart is really for an outward, as well as an inward union. Nothing shall be wanting on my part to bring it about; but I cannot see how it can possibly be effected, till we all think and speak the same things. I rejoice to hear that you and your brother are more moderate with respect to *sinless perfection*. Time and experience, I believe, will convince you that, attaining such a state in this life, is not the doctrine of the everlasting gospel. As for *universal redemption*, if we omit on each side the talking for or against reprobation, which we may fairly do, and agree, as we already do, in giving an universal offer to all poor sinners that will come and taste of the water of life, I think we may manage very well. But it is difficult to determine such matters at a distance. Some time next year, I hope to see you face to face. I hope ere long to be delivered from my outward embarrassments. I long to owe no man anything but love. This is a debt, reverend sir, I shall never be able to discharge to you, or your brother. Jesus will pay you all. For His sake, I love and honour you very much, and rejoice as much in your success as in my own. I cannot agree with you in some principles, but that need not hinder love. What have you done with the Moravian Brethren? Their affairs are in confusion here. I think their foundation is too narrow for their superstructure. I believe, in their plan, there are many plants that our heavenly Father hath not planted. The Lord bless what is right, and rectify what is wrong in them, in us, and in all. O for heaven! where we shall mistake, judge, and grieve one another no more. Continue to pray for us, and assure yourself, that you are always remembered by, reverend and very dear sir, your most affectionate, though unworthy younger brother and willing servant for Christ's sake,

"GEORGE WHITEFIELD."[1]

So much for Whitefield. What about his English co-adjutors? Howel Harris writes:—

"Wales is like the garden of the Lord; many are awakened, and fresh

[1] Whitefield's Works, vol. ii., p. 128.

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doors are opened. All the ministers and exhorters go on heartily, and the presence and power of the Lord are still more manifest. Hasten thy winged motion, oh glorious day! when I shall see Paul and Barnabas, Luther and Calvin, and all the saints, joining in one song, and not so much as remembering that they ever differed. I have lately, at their own request, discoursed three or four times before several gentlemen, ladies of fashion, some magistrates, counsellors, attorneys, and doctors in divinity, and they behaved well. I have been all round South Wales, travelling often twenty, and sometimes thirty miles a day, and preaching twice, besides settling and conferring with the societies everywhere. I am about to begin a round through North Wales, where I expect to be sent home, or at least imprisoned. For ten days, my life will be in continual danger."

Joseph Williams, of Kidderminster, relates, that he had recently been on a preaching tour in Wales, and in Yorkshire. At Haworth, he had taken a bed at the house of Grimshaw, with whom he held sweet fellowship, from six o'clock at night till two o'clock next morning. Grimshaw's church was always crowded, and hundreds were not able to get in at all. People flocked to hear him from all the neighbouring towns, and as many as a hundred strangers were accustomed, on a Sunday, to dine at the village inn. The surrounding clergy were caballing to get him suspended; and, if they succeeded, he was resolved to become at once an itinerant preacher. The landlord, at Colne, told Williams that Grimshaw had preached in that town "damnation beyond all sense and reason," his sermon lasting two long hours; and that, "every week, and almost every day, he preached in barns and private houses, and was a great encourager of conventicles."

Thomas Adams says, he had been preaching in a barn at Gosport, and that in the neighbourhood of Portsmouth the good work was prospering. In Wilts, he had seen religion reviving. In Gloucestershire, his labours had been blessed, and the meetings of the societies had been a pentecost. When at Bristol there had been "a brave shaking among the dry bones."

James Relly (who afterwards founded a sect called "Rellyan Universalists,") observes, that at Bristol he had examined the whole society once a week, but the place had been "a furnace" to him. At Bath, he had "particular freedom." In Gloucestershire, he had been preaching every day,

and thrice on Sundays; and had found the people "honest, simple, and hungering after the bread of life." At Wednesbury, he found his heart enlarged every time he preached. At Birmingham, he had formed a society of twenty members, and had left them with great regret. At Bromsgrove, he had preached in an Independent chapel, to a congregation of "simple, loving souls." At Tewkesbury, a furious mob assaulted him, swore, cursed, laughed, pricked the congregation with pins, threw handfuls of snuff among them, and brickbats and dirt; and broke the windows of the house; but, in the midst of all, he continued preaching for an hour. 1747 Age 44

John Relly was witnessing "many inroads made in Satan's kingdom," and he seldom preached without seeing conversions.

Herbert Jenkins had been preaching in Scotland, and conversing with the clergy, many of whom he pronounces to be "good men, and very powerful preachers." In Edinburgh, he had found nearly twenty societies, including one composed of soldiers, who had fought at the battle of Culloden. In the park, he had had a congregation of many thousands. "At Glasgow," says the *Scots Magazine*, "he was complimented with the freedom of the city, and was entertained by the magistrates and by the presbytery. He made no public collections as Whitefield did, and his behaviour altogether was inoffensive and becoming."

John Edwards had made a tour through the midland counties, where "King Jesus was getting Himself the victory." He writes:—"Oh what times and seasons we have had; souls fired with the love of God, and following the word from place to place, horse and foot, like men engaged in a war, determined to take the city by force of arms." At Haverfordwest and in Wales, multitudes flocked to hear him.

Certain members of the Tabernacle society, in London, relate that the place was generally full; and a gentleman at Plymouth writes, that "the work goes on very comfortably there."[1]

These hints will suggest to the reader an idea of the work

[1] The above extracts are all taken from a 12mo volume, published at the time, and consisting of a collection of letters, entitled "The Christian History."

1747 Age 44 that was being done by the preachers who propagated Whitefield's doctrines. All the letters, filling more than a hundred pages of the "Christian History," breathe the most ardent piety, and are full of gratitude, hope, and exultation.

Charles Wesley spent the first two months of 1747 in a journey from Newcastle to Bristol. The next six months he made London and Bristol the centre of his operations. The last four months of the year were employed in Ireland.

Wesley himself was travelling almost incessantly, and we must now try to follow him.

On January 11 he left London for Bristol. Reaching Devizes, he found the town in the greatest uproar. Swelling words, oaths, curses, and threatenings were abundant. Mr. Innys, the curate, who knew of Wesley's coming, had spent the day in visiting from house to house, to stir up the people against him. He had also published an advertisement, in the most public places in the town, of "An obnubilative, pantomime entertainment, to be exhibited at Mr. Clark's," in whose house Wesley had to preach. For the present, however, the high purpose of the zealous curate was not realised. At the appointed hour, Wesley commenced preaching. The well instigated mob were listeners, but they were all dumb dogs, and attention sat on every face.

Sixteen days afterwards, Wesley returned to this clerical preserve, where he again found, that great efforts had been used to raise a rabble, but, he writes, "it was lost labour; all that could be mustered were a few straggling soldiers, and forty or fifty boys."

Wesley told his brother, "there was no such thing as raising a mob at Devizes"; but Charles soon found it to be otherwise. Coming within a month after, on February 24, a crowd awaited him, headed by "the chief gentleman of the town," while Mr. Innys, the energetic curate, stood with them in the street, jumping for very joy. The reverend persecutor had been more successful in organising ruffians to do his dirty work, in the case of Charles, than he had been in the case of Wesley himself. He had declared in the pulpit, as well as from house to house, that he had heard Charles preach blasphemy before the university, and tell his congregation, "If you don't receive the Holy Ghost while I breathe upon you,

you will all be damned." He had secured the services of two of the chief men in the borough, Messrs. Sutton and Willy, both of them Dissenters. The poor parson was so supremely happy, that he began to dance. The church bells were rung backwards. Mrs. Philip's house was ransacked; the windows were smashed, and the shutters of the shop torn down; the door was blocked up with a wagon; and lights were kindled to prevent the preacher's escaping. The mob then proceeded to the inn, and seized the horses of Charles Wesley and his friend Meriton, and, some hours afterwards, the poor animals were found in a pond, up to the neck in water. A water engine was played into the house where Charles was staying; the rooms were flooded; and the goods were spoiled. The leader of the small society was thrown into a pool, and, almost miraculously, escaped an untimely death. The son of the mayor had been converted, and, instead of running away to sea, had joined the society. His father was a coward, and had left the town, when he ought to have remained in it; but his mother sent her maid, begging Charles Wesley to disguise himself in a woman's clothes, and endeavour to escape. At length, the constable came, beseeching him to leave the town; and poor Mr. Sutton and Mr. Willy began to fear the mob, which they and their clerical friend Innys had been the means of raising, was becoming more violent than might be safe. In the midst of this, Charles Wesley and Mr. Meriton took the opportunity to get away; and, after escaping a most murderous attack from a couple of bulldogs, not less savage than the bloodthirsty villains which hounded them on, the two martyr like ministers began singing the hymn commencing, "Worship, and thanks, and blessing;" and thus, in a tone of triumph, made their way to Bath and Bristol.[1] 1747 Age 44

Strangely enough, Wesley was accustomed to choose the worst season of the year for his most trying journey. Why? We cannot tell. Having finished his visitation of the London classes, he set out, on the 16th of February, for Newcastle. A north wind blew so hard and keen, that, when he and his companions got to Hatfield, they could scarcely use either their hands or feet. In making their way to Baldock, they

[1] C. Wesley's Journal.

1747 Age 44 encountered a storm of snow and hail, which drove so vehemently in their faces, that sight was useless, and breathing almost impossible. Next day, they had the greatest difficulty in keeping their horses on their feet. The wind rose higher and higher, till it threatened to overturn both man and beast. A storm of rain and hail drove through their coats, great and small, boots, and everything; and, freezing as it fell, their eyebrows were hung with icicles. On Stamford Heath, the snow was lying in mountain drifts, which sometimes well-nigh swallowed up both horses and riders; but, about sunset, they came, cold and weary, to Brigg-Casterton. On the 18th, they were told, so much snow had fallen in the night, that travelling was impracticable. Wesley replied, "At least, we can walk twenty miles a day, with our horses in our hands"; and off he set. The north-east wind was piercing; the main road was impassable; Wesley was distracted with the toothache; but, at five in the afternoon, they arrived at Newark. Next day, they came to Epworth, where they rested the three days following; with the exception, that, on Sunday Wesley preached twice in the humble meeting-house, and once, after the evening prayers, at Epworth cross, to most of the adult population of the town.

The next three days were spent in an excursion to Grimsby and back again to Epworth. Charles Wesley had been at the former town seven weeks before, when the meeting-house was invaded by a mob of wild creatures, almost naked, who ran about the place, attacking all they met. Several caught at the preacher to drag him down, and one struck at him. At length, they fell to fighting and beating each other, till, in a few minutes, they literally drove themselves out of the very room from which they meant to drive the poor Methodists; and one of the ringleaders, armed with a great club, swore he would conduct the minister to his lodgings, and forthwith led him through the drunken rioters to brother Blow's.[1]

On this occasion, when Wesley himself came, "a young gentleman and his companions" drowned Wesley's voice, till a poor woman took up the cause, and, by keenly and wittily

[1] C. Wesley's Journal.

reciting a few passages of the young spark's life, turned the laugh of his companions upon him, and obliged him to skulk away discomfited. Next day, he came to ask Wesley's pardon, and thus, for some years, Methodist persecution at Grimsby ceased. At Tetney, Wesley found the most remarkable society in England, with Micah Elmoor for its leader. The members were all poor, and yet each gave from eightpence to two shillings weekly,—certainly a large amount, considering the rate of agricultural wages and the worth of money. The members of the London society were not averaging more than about a penny per week. Wesley was surprised at the difference, and asked, "How is this?" To which Micah Elmoor replied, "All of us, who are single persons, have agreed together, to give both ourselves and all we have to God; and, by this means, we are able, from time to time, to entertain all the strangers that come to Tetney; who often have no food to eat, nor any friend to give them lodging." 1747 Age 44

On February 26, Wesley left Epworth, and proceeded northwards, preaching, on his way, at Sykehouse, Acomb, Thirsk, and Osmotherley. At the last mentioned place, where he had already found a friend in the popish priest, the clergyman of the parish allowed him to preach twice in the parish church. "The bitterest gainsayers," says Wesley, "seemed now to be melted into love. All were convinced we are no papists. How wisely does God order all things in their season!"

On the 2nd of March, he reached Newcastle. At this period, Grace Murray had charge of the Orphan House family. More than once, she had been an inmate; but she and sister Jackson, like rival queens in the same establishment, were unable to agree, and, at least twice, Wesley had had the unenviable task of reconciling two gossiping women, whose religion made them proud and garrulous, rather than of "a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." Grace's first husband was drowned in 1742, upon which she removed from London to Newcastle, where she was appointed leader of several classes. Within six months of her husband's death, she became the sweetheart of John Brydon, and it was commonly supposed they were about to

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marry, but, in the long run, Grace declined the honour of John's alliance. At the end of 1745, she was made Orphan House keeper, and retained the office at the time of Wesley's visit, in 1747.[1] Unfortunately, we shall have to recur to sister Murray at a subsequent period.

Another inmate was Jeannie Keith, belonging to a respectable family of the Keiths in Scotland. Being persecuted on account of her religious principles, she fled to England, and took shelter in Wesley's Orphan House, where she went by the cognomen of "Holy Mary." She was afterwards married to James Bowmaker, a master builder at Alnwick, who erected the first Methodist chapel in that town, and was the grandfather of the Rev. James Everett. She had two children, and died about the year 1752. It has generally been supposed, that Jeannie Keith fell from grace, this opinion being founded upon an expression in one of Wesley's letters, written a year or two previous to her death;[2] but the inference is hardly legitimate, and the thing itself is incorrect. The writer is possessed of authentic manuscripts, showing, that though Jeannie returned to the presbyterian religion, she continued faithful to her great Master to the very last. A year only before her death, she was diligently distributing the works of John and Charles Wesley among her friends and relatives, including Lord and Lady Saltoun; and the greatest crime that I can find alleged against her, is that of rejoining the church of her childhood. An extract from one of Jeannie's letters to Wesley, in 1747, may be useful.

"I bless God, that ever He brought me into this house. It is like a little heaven to me. There is not only such love, but such freedom among us, as I could not have believed would have been so soon. I have never seen a thing, that I thought amiss in any of the family, neither do they seem to think anything wrong in me. I am as much entangled with the great ones of the world as ever; and if they are not with me, I am with them. I have great reasonings, whether to shake off all acquaintance with them or not. I am surprised how they bear the plainness of speech that I use; for with tears do I tell them the danger that their souls are in. Oh! forget not your weak child,

"JEANNIE KEITH."[3]

[1] Manuscript in British Museum.
[2] See Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 181.
[3] *Methodist Magazine*, 1778, p. 474.

In another letter, dated November 1, 1748, and addressed to Wesley, she writes :— 1747 Age 44

"I think we never had a more blessed time in this house, since it was a house. I know of nothing amiss betwixt sister Murray and me; but we cannot be as one soul; for, you know, she must have a little pre-eminence. I am exceeding willing that she should; and so we live in great peace, and, I believe, in love. I am still unwilling to take anything from anybody. I work out of choice, having never yet learned how long a woman can be idle and innocent. I do not murmur because I have not worldly goods, or a little skin-deep beauty; but I am happy, because, as long as God lives, I shall enjoy Him; so long as there is a heaven, I shall possess it. If this thought cannot make me happy, without anything else, I deserve to be miserable.

"Your affectionate and loving child,

"JEANNIE KEITH."[1]

How many more refugee sisters there were in the Orphan House, we are not informed; but we learn from the manuscript already quoted, that, about this period, Christopher Hopper, Benjamin Wheatley, Edward Dunstan, and Eleazer Webster, all of them either already or about to become itinerants, were, more or less, Orphan House residents; and it is probable, that these were some of the young men referred to in the extracts following. The Orphan House was, at once, a place of worship, a school for orphans, a refuge for the injured and oppressed, the northern home of Wesley, and the "theological institution" of his preachers. Wesley writes :—

"March 2.—I rode to Newcastle. I found all in the house of the same spirit; pouring out their souls to God many times in a day together, and breathing nothing but love and brotherly kindness."

"March 4.—This week I read over, with some young men, a compendium of rhetoric, and a system of ethics. I see not, why a man of tolerable understanding may not learn in six months more of solid philosophy than is commonly learned at Oxford in four (perhaps seven) years."

The old Orphan House was thus the first institution in which young Methodist preachers received instructions for the efficient discharge of their ministerial duties. Here Wesley himself studied. During this very visit, he read "The Exhortations of Ephraem Syrus," whose picture of a broken and contrite heart had never been excelled since the days of David,—and "The History of the Puritans"; after which he

[1] Collection of Letters: Dublin, 1784.

1747 Age 44 wrote:—"I stand in amaze: first, at the execrable spirit of persecution which drove those venerable men out of the Church, and with which Queen Elizabeth's clergy were as deeply tinctured as ever Queen Mary's were; secondly at the weakness of those holy confessors, many of whom spent so much of their time and strength in disputing about surplices and hoods, or kneeling at the Lord's supper."

It is a curious fact, that, though only little more than four years had elapsed since the society at Newcastle was founded by Charles Wesley, it was now reduced from above eight hundred members to four hundred. Wesley, however, considered, according to the old proverb, that "the half was more than the whole"; but if this were true, the whole must have been a motley mass.

Having spent seven weeks at Newcastle and in the neighbourhood, Wesley set out, on Easter Monday, April 20, for London. In the evening, he reached Osmotherley, where, after having ridden, at least, sixty miles, and preached twice, he mounted a tombstone, and concluded the day by a sermon from "The Lord is risen indeed." Here John Nelson met him, having just escaped from the hands of his murderous persecutors in the vicinity of York.

Proceeding to Thirsk, Wesley found the town full of holiday folks, drinking, cursing, swearing, and cockfighting. Making his way to Leeds and other towns in the west riding of Yorkshire, he visited the Moravian settlement at Fulneck, which was now approaching completion. "It stands," says he, "on the side of a hill, commanding all the vale beneath, and the opposite hill. The front is exceeding grand, though plain, being faced with fine, smooth, white stone. The Germans suppose it will cost about three thousand pounds; it is well if it be not nearer ten. But that is no concern to the English Brethren; for they are told, and believe, that all the money will come from beyond the sea." We shall find, in a subsequent chapter, that Wesley's doubts respecting the "ways and means" were not unfounded.

At Keighley, Wesley ascertained that the small society of ten had increased tenfold. He visited Grimshaw, and preached in Haworth church. At Halifax, he addressed "a civil, senseless congregation," and baptized a Quaker. Meeting with

William Darney, who, besides converting Grimshaw, had been the means of forming a number of societies among the mountains of Lancashire and Yorkshire, Wesley, at his request, set out to visit those infant churches, at Roughlee, Widdap, Stonesey Gate, and other places. While preaching one morning at five o'clock, near New Church, in Rossendale, one of his hearers was a young man, then in his twentieth year, who afterwards rose to a high position,—John Butterworth, for more than fifty years the pastor of a Baptist church, the author of a valuable concordance to the Holy Scriptures, and the father of the late Joseph Butterworth, Esq., who was long a distinguished Methodist in the metropolis, and a member of the House of Commons. 1747 Age 44

From Rossendale, Wesley proceeded to Manchester, where, on the 7th of May, he preached at Salford cross. Within the last few months, a few young men had formed themselves into a society, had rented a room, and written a letter desiring the Wesleys to own them as brethren. The "room" was a small apartment in a house built upon a rock on the bank of the Irwell, on the north side of Blackfriars Bridge, at the bottom of a large yard, known by the name of the "Rose and Crown yard," and which was filled with wood built, thatched cottages. The house, containing the "preaching room" was three stories high. The ground floor was a joiner's shop; the rooms in the middle story were the residence of a newly married couple; the garret was the "room," and was itself also the home of a poor woman, who there plied her spinning wheel, while her husband, in the same apartment, flung the shuttle. Christopher Hopper, at one of the Manchester conferences, referred to this little meeting-house, and said: "In 1749, I preached in an old garret, that overhung the river, in the neighbourhood of the old bridge. The coals were in one corner of the room, the looms in another, and I was in danger of breaking my neck in getting up to it. The congregation consisted of not more than from twenty to thirty persons."[1] Such was the cradle of Manchester Methodism, in 1747. Wesley says, "their house

[1] Everett's "Methodism in Manchester," p. 58.

1747 Age 44 would not contain a tenth part of the people,"—and hence he went to Salford cross.

While at Manchester, Wesley made his first visit to Boothbank. Here resided John and Alice Crosse. Alice had been a rude, uncultivated creature, but had a dash of the heroine in her constitution. "John Crosse," said she, "wilt thou go to heaven with me? If not, I am determined not to go to hell with thee." Her decision was firm and final, and honest John soon joined her in her journey to the better land. They now gladly received the servants of God into their dwelling, a pulpit was fixed in their largest room, a society was formed, and Alice was made leader. Her endeavours to be useful were indefatigable. Common beggars were intercepted, warned of their sin and danger, prayed with, and then relieved. Gentlemen, who came a-hunting, were run after, and told, in the plainest terms, the consequences of their sinful doings. On her husband being made a constable, (she having far more courage than himself) he would send her to the constables' meetings, to defend the despised and persecuted Methodists. When disappointed of a preacher, Alice herself would occupy the pulpit, and, with faithful energy, declare the truth as it is in Jesus. Though marked with rusticity, she was, in decision and majesty, a Deborah.[1] "She was," says John Pawson, "one of the most zealous, active, spiritually minded women I ever knew." She died in 1774, aged sixty-five. Her house, for generations, was the happy home of Methodist itinerants. Up to a few years ago, a bootjack, made by John Nelson, at one of his visits, was carefully preserved by her descendants living in the same farm dwelling; and on the panes of glass in the window of what was known as "the prophet's chamber," were not a few inscriptions written by the brave hearted evangelists, who there found a warm welcome. Boothbank was the loving centre where the first Methodists of Lancashire and Cheshire used to meet, for friendly counsel, and the old farmhouse was licensed for preaching before any Methodist chapel was built in Manchester. Five years after this first visit by Wesley, the first Cheshire quarterly meeting was held in the humble

[1] Everett's "Methodism in Manchester."

dwelling of John and Alice Crosse, when Chester sent, by Jonathan Pritchard, the sum of twelve shillings; Bolton, by George Eskrick, eight shillings and twopence; Manchester, by Richard Barlow, twopounds three shillings and fivepence; while Boothbank itself contributed the not insignificant sum of ten shillings and elevenpence.[1] Wesley's description of the Boothbank congregation, at his first visit, is brief but beautiful,—"a quiet and loving people." 1747 Age 44

Leaving Boothbank, he proceeded to Mr. Anderton's, near Northwich. Here he preached, prayed, and talked for more than two hours, his rustic congregation being intermixed with "several of the gay and rich." Many long years elapsed, however, before Methodist preaching was established in the town itself, and here, as elsewhere, Methodism met with brutal persecution. On one occasion, the preacher was pulled down the street by the hair of his head.[2] On another, John Morris narrowly escaped being thrown over the bridge into the river.[3] The mob, encouraged by two young fops of the names of Barrow and Jeffreys, rejoiced not only in throwing stones, mud, and rotten eggs, but in dragging the Methodist itinerants into a quagmire, which divided the townships of Northwich and Witton. One of the first Methodists here was Isaac Barnes, a seedsman, who was often rolled in the foul river, and in other respects made to suffer; but his sister once used a device by which the biters were bitten. While the mob were shouting, swearing, and throwing stones at the front of her brother's house, she quietly heated the poker, and then, letting it cool till its redness was removed, she rushed into the street, and pretended to strike the assembled scamps. One seized the poker, but instantly let it go. Others, in quick succession, did the same; and, in a little while, the amazon was victorious; by their own act, in seizing the heated poker, most of the assailants were in burning agony; and the valorous mob were surprised and scattered. Moses Dale was another of the first Northwich Methodists, —a poor and plain, but earnest and honest man,—a class-leader and local preacher, who was once carried round the

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1843, pp. 26, 379. [2] Ibid. 1830, p. 857.
[3] Ibid. 1795, p. 76.

1747 Age 44 town on a butcher's block, and then set down in the market place, where the crowd with cow horns blew into his ears till he was almost deafened. Moses was a man of small ability, but a son of thunder. Once a year, he made a preaching tour through Derbyshire and Shropshire, and, on one occasion, preached in the vicarage at Madeley, with his hands on Fletcher's shoulders. "Moses," said some young swells in a chemist's shop, "is it true that you know your sins forgiven?" "I am forbidden to tell you," quietly replied Moses. "Who forbids you, Moses?" "Jesus Christ," said Moses; "look at Matthew vii. 6." "Surely, Moses, you don't compare us to swine?" "No," quoth Moses, "but the Bible does, and I have no occasion." Poor Moses died in 1788.

From Northwich, Wesley went to Congleton, and Macclesfield, and Sheffield, and Leeds; and then, turning round, he hurried, by way of Nottingham and Birmingham, to London, which he reached on the 21st of May.

For the last eight years, Wesley had been shut out of the London churches; but now, to one of them, he was again admitted. The Rev. Richard Thomas Bateman, a man of high birth and great natural endowments, was rector of St. Bartholomew's the Great, in Smithfield, and also held a living in Wales, where he had been converted under the powerful ministry of the Rev. Howel Davies.[1] Being converted himself, he, at once, with great fervour, began to pray and preach for the conversion of others.

As soon as Wesley got back to London, Mr. Bateman offered him his pulpit, and the offer was accepted. The church was crowded to excess. The churchwardens complained to Bishop Gibson, saying, "My lord, Mr. Bateman, our rector, invites Mr. Wesley very frequently to preach in his church." The bishop replied, "What would you have me do? I have no right to hinder him. Mr. Wesley is a clergyman, regularly ordained, and under no ecclesiastical censure;"[2] and so the matter ended.

From the first, the financial affairs of the London society had been entrusted to stewards. Hitherto, they had been

[1] "Life and Times of Countess of Huntingdon," vol. i., p. 62.
[2] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 138.

sixteen in number, but Wesley now reduced them to seven, to whom he gave a series of instructions how to regulate their behaviour. They were to hold meetings every Tuesday and Thursday morning. Every meeting was to begin and end with prayer. Once a month, their accounts were to be transcribed into the ledger. Each, in turn, was to be chairman for a month. Nothing was to be done without the consent of the minister. They were to be deeply serious. Only one was to speak at once, and he only just loud enough to make himself heard. They were to avoid all clamour and contention. If they could not relieve the poor who came, they were not to grieve them. They were to give them soft words, if nothing else; and to make them glad to come, even though they had to go away empty. A steward breaking any of these rules, after being thrice admonished by the chairman, was to be deposed from office. 1747 Age 44

It may be asked whence the stewards obtained their funds. The answer is, that, for more than forty years, all the money collected in the London classes was put into the hands of these officials, and was distributed in relieving the necessities of the poor. Not a shilling seems to have been spent upon the preachers' salaries.[1]

Visiting the sick, and the opening of the dispensary, have been already noticed. But, besides these, there were connected with the old Foundery other expensive and valuable institutions. Two small houses were taken and fitted up for the reception of needy and deserving widows, for the support of whom the collections at the sacraments and the contributions of the bands were given. In 1748, Wesley writes: "In this (commonly called the poor-house) we have now nine widows, one blind woman, two poor children, and two upper servants, a maid and a man. I might add, four or five preachers; for I myself, as well as the other preachers who are in town, diet with the poor, on the same food, and at the same table; and we rejoice herein, as a comfortable earnest of our eating bread together in our Father's kingdom."[2]

Then there was a school with two masters, and about sixty

[1] Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 108.
[2] Wesley's Works, vol. viii., p. 256.

1747 Age 44 children, a few of whom paid for their tuition, but the greater part, being extremely poor, were taught and even clothed gratuitously. The rules were characteristic, but some of them exceedingly absurd. No child was to be admitted under the age of six. All the children were to be present every morning at the five o'clock preaching. The school hours were from six to twelve, and from one to five. No holidays were granted. No child was to speak in school, but to the masters; and any child who was absent two days in one week, without leave, was to be excluded. The education consisted of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Two stewards were appointed to receive subscriptions and to pay expenses; and also to pray with and exhort the children twice a week; and to meet the parents every Wednesday morning, and give them counsels how to train their children when at home.[1]

Then there was a lending society. Observing that people often needed small sums of money, but knew not where to borrow them, Wesley went from one end of London to the other, and, in a few days, begged £50. This was lodged in the hands of stewards, who attended every Tuesday morning for the purpose of lending to those who wanted any small amount, not exceeding twenty shillings, on condition that the loan should be repaid within three months. Wesley writes: "It is almost incredible, but, with this inconsiderable sum, two hundred and fifty have been assisted within the year 1747. Will not God put it into the heart of some lover of mankind to increase this little stock? If this is not lending unto the Lord, what is?"[2]

The stock was increased. At the commencement of 1748, Wesley made a public collection for the same object, and by this and by other means the capital was raised, in 1767, to £120,[3] after which the maximum loan was altered from one pound to five.[4] Hundreds of the honest poor were greatly assisted by this benevolent device; and, among others, the well known Lackington, who about the year 1774 was penniless, but who, by the help of Wesley's fund, began a book business, which grew to such immense dimensions, that, eighteen years

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. viii., p. 257. [2] Ibid. vol. viii., p. 257.
[3] Ibid. vol. iii,, p. 258. [4] Ibid. vol. viii., p. 257.

afterwards, its annual sales were more than a hundred thousand volumes, from which Lackington, the quondam cobbler, realised the noble income of £5000 a year. 1747 Age 44

Such were the benevolent institutions connected with the Foundery in 1747. Wesley was often accused of making himself rich. In reply to this, in 1748, he sarcastically remarks:—"Some have supposed my revenue was no greater than that of the Bishop of London. Others have computed, that I receive £800 a year from Yorkshire only. If so, it cannot be so little as £10,000 a year which I receive out of all England! Accordingly, the rector of Redruth extends the calculation pretty considerably. 'Let me see,' said he; 'two millions of Methodists, and each of these paying twopence a week.' If so, I must have £860,000, with some odd shillings and pence, a year! A tolerable competence! But be it more or less, it is nothing at all to me. All that is contributed or collected, in every place, is both received and expended by others; nor have I so much as the 'beholding thereof with my eyes.' And so it will be, till I turn Turk or pagan. For I look upon all this revenue, be it what it may, as sacred to God and the poor; out of which, if I want anything, I am relieved, even as another poor man. So were originally all ecclesiastical revenues, as every man of learning knows; and the bishops and priests used them only as such. If any use them otherwise now, God help them!"[1]

The conference of 1747 began on the 15th of June, and ended on the 20th. This was the largest yet held. Six clergymen were present, namely, John and Charles Wesley, Charles Manning, Richard Thomas Bateman, Henry Piers, and Vincent Perronet; also Howel Harris; and nine preachers, John Jones, Thomas Maxfield, Jonathan Reeves, John Nelson, John Bennet, John Downes, Robert Swindells, John Maddern, and Thomas Crouch, the last mentioned being a local preacher only.[2]

Two doctrines were discussed at the conference of 1747; first, whether a Divine assurance of the forgiveness of sins is an essential part of justifying faith; and secondly, whether

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. viii., p. 258.
[2] Minutes (edit. 1862), p. 38.

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entire sanctification is attainable in the present life. It was inquired, "Is justifying faith a Divine assurance that Christ loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me?*" Answer: "We believe it is."[1] This was unguarded language, and John Wesley soon felt it so. A month later, he seems to have examined the subject more closely, and wrote to his brother Charles as follows:—

"Yesterday I was thinking on a *desideratum* among us, a *genesis problematica* on justifying faith. A skeleton of it, I have roughly set down.

"Is justifying faith a sense of pardon? *Negatur.*

"By justifying faith, I mean, that faith, which whosoever hath not is under the wrath and curse of God. By a sense of pardon, I mean, a distinct, explicit assurance, that my sins are forgiven.

"I allow (1) That there is such an explicit assurance. (2) That it is the common privilege of real Christians. (3) That it is the proper Christian faith, which purifies the heart, and overcomes the world.

"But I cannot allow, that justifying faith is such an assurance, or necessarily connected therewith.

"Because, if justifying faith necessarily implies such an explicit assurance of pardon, then every one who has it not, and every one so long as he has it not, is under the wrath and curse of God. But this is a supposition contrary to Scripture and to experience (Isa. l. 10, and Acts x. 34).

"Again, the assertion, that justifying faith is a sense of pardon, is contrary to reason; it is flatly absurd. For how can a sense of our having received pardon be the condition of our receiving it?

"If you object, 'We know fifteen hundred persons who have this assurance.' Perhaps so, but this does not prove that they were not justified till they received it. 2. 'We have been exceedingly blessed in preaching this doctrine.' We have been blessed in preaching the great truths of the gospel; although we tacked to them, in the simplicity of our hearts, a proposition which was not true. 3. 'But does not our Church give this account of justifying faith?' I am sure she does of saving or Christian faith; I think she does of justifying faith too. But to the law and testimony. All men may err: but the word of the Lord shall stand for ever."[2]

This seems to clash with Wesley's previously expressed sentiments, and, in 1809, there was a somewhat bitter controversy on the subject between the Rev. Melville Horne and the Rev. Edward Hare and others. Suffice it to say here, that the definition of faith in the Church of England's homily on salvation, which Wesley had been wont to quote, was rather a

[1] Minutes (edit. 1862), p. 15.
[2] Whitehead's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 235.

definition of the *habitual* faith of a justified man, than of the *act* by which a sinner is first justified and saved.[1] Wesley held this corrected view to the end of life. 1747 Age 44

As it respects the second question raised at the conference of 1747, it was allowed—(1) That many of those who have died in the faith were not made "perfect in love" till a little before death; (2) that the term "sanctified" is continually applied by St. Paul to all that are justified, but that, by this term *alone*, he rarely, if ever, means saved from all sin, and consequently, it is improper to use it in such a sense without adding the word "wholly" or "entirely"; and (3) that the inspired writers very rarely speak either of, or to those who are wholly sanctified, and that therefore it behoves us, in public at least, rarely to speak, in full and explicit terms, concerning entire sanctification. Having conceded such points (which may sound strangely in the ears of some at the present day), the Conference proceeds to show most conclusively, from numerous texts of Scripture, that believers ought to expect to be saved from all sin, previous to death; but exhorts such as have attained to this state of grace not to speak of it to those who know not God, nor indeed to any without some particular reason, without some particular good in view, and even then to have an especial care to avoid all appearance of boasting, and to speak more loudly and convincingly by their lives, than they can do by their tongues.

The remainder of the conference sittings were principally occupied in determining miscellaneous matters. The right of private judgment was enforced. All agreed to read, before the next conference, all the tracts which had been published by Wesley, and to mark every passage which they considered to be wrong or dubious. It was ruled, that the Methodists were not schismatics, any more than they were rebels or murderers. It was agreed that they had been too limited in their field preaching; and that they had paid "respect to persons," by devoting more of their time to the rich than to the poor, by not speaking to them so plain as to the others, and by admitting them into the society and bands, though they had never

[1] Watson's Life of Wesley, p 163.

1747 Age 44 received remission of sins, nor met in any band at all. Precautions were to be employed in keeping from the Lord's table unworthy communicants, first, by exercising more care in admitting members into the society, and secondly, by giving notes to none but those who applied for them on the days appointed in each quarter. Wesley's "assistants" were now twenty-two in number. The names of thirty-eight local preachers are given, including a number, who, to some extent, were already labouring as itinerants.

Who can fail to admire the simple, honest earnestness of these early conclaves of godly Methodists?—men, without preconceived ideas, desiring above all things to ascertain what is truth, and to adopt the most useful plans in spreading it? "In our first conference," say they, "it was agreed to examine every point from the foundation. Have we not been somewhat fearful in doing this? What were we afraid of? Of overturning our first principles? Whoever was afraid of this, it was a vain fear. For if they are true, they will bear the strictest examination. If they are false, the sooner they are overturned the better. Let us all pray for a willingness to receive light; an invariable desire to know of every doctrine, whether it be of God." Men animated by such a principle were sure to have happy meetings, and were not likely to go far astray.

On the Sunday after the conference ended, Wesley set out for Cornwall. It was the eve of a parliamentary election, and, at Exeter, while his clothes were being dried, he wrote "A Word to a Freeholder;" and, at St. Ives, so successfully warned the Methodists against bribery, that, though sorely tempted, "not one of them would even eat or drink at the expense of the candidate for whom they voted." At Plymouth, a lieutenant with his retinue of soldiers, drummers, and a mob, came to make disturbance. At St. Agnes, the rabble threw dirt and clods; and Mr. Shepherd's horse, taking fright, leaped over a man who was stooping down, the poor fellow screaming most lustily, but escaping unhurt. Here another man, learning that Wesley was about to preach, said, "If he does, I'll stone him," and forthwith began to fill his pockets with the needful missiles. He reached the spot. Wesley took his text, "He that is with-

out sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." The man's courage failed him, stone after stone stealthily dropped from his well filled pockets, and he went away with the impression that the preacher was something wonderful.[1] At Sithney, Wesley met the stewards of all the Cornish societies, and found that there were eighteen exhorters in the county; that three of these had no gifts at all for the work, neither natural nor supernatural; that a fourth had neither gifts nor grace, but was a dull, empty, self conceited man; and that a fifth had considerable gifts, but had evidently made shipwreck of the grace of God. These, therefore, he set aside, and advised the societies not to hear them. The remaining thirteen were to preach when there was no preacher in their own or the neighbouring societies, provided that they would take no step without the advice of those who had more experience than themselves. At Newlyn, where Peter Jaco had been recently converted,[2] some poor wretches of Penzance began cursing and swearing, and thrust Wesley down the bank on which he was preaching. At Port Isaac, the mob hallooed and shouted, but none except the captain lifted up his hand to strike. At Camelford, a large train attended him, but only one stone struck him. At Terdinny, the parson affirmed publicly in his church, that Wesley's errand was to obtain a hundred pounds, which must be raised directly. These were the unpleasantnesses of his journey; but, upon the whole, his visit was happy and successful; and, almost in every place, he found the good work prospering, as the following letter to his friend Ebenezer Blackwell shows :—

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"St. Ives, *July* 10, 1747.

"Dear Sir,—A great and effectual door is opened now, almost in every corner of this country. There is such a change within these two years as has hardly been seen in any other part of England. Wherever we went, we used to carry our lives in our hands; and now there is not a dog to wag his tongue. Several ministers are clearly convinced of the truth; few are bitter; most seem to stand neuter. Some of the gentlemen (so called) are almost the only opposers now; drinking, revelling, cursing, swearing gentlemen, who neither will enter into the kingdom of heaven themselves, nor suffer any others, if they can hinder

[1] Manuscript. [2] *Methodist Magazine*, 1850, p. 33.

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it. The most violent Jacobites among these are continually crying out that we are bringing the Pretender; and some of these worthy men bear his majesty's commission, as justices of the peace.

"I am, dear sir,

"Your affectionate servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."[1]

Wesley got back to Bristol on August 1, and, three days afterwards, set out for Ireland.

Poor Ireland! Even then, Ireland was England's greatest difficulty. A hundred years had elapsed since the bloody rebellion of 1641; and more than half a century had passed since King William's victory at the battle of the Boyne. Irish parliaments, during the reign of Anne, and the first and second Georges, had riveted and extended the penal laws against papists. Ireland was in a state of torpid tranquillity—a slumbering volcano, stirred only by apprehensions of internal commotion, or by the agitation of partisan quarrels between the rival factions of court and country. The massacre of 1641, and the sanguinary persecution in the reign of the bigoted James II., were still fresh in the recollection of Protestants, and heightened their animosity to the utmost; while, on the other hand, discomfitures and disasters, penal laws and legalized oppression, rendered the hatred of the papists virulent beyond example. Irritating and maddening circumstances fomented, on both sides, the most rancorous malignity: protestantism was triumphant, and an imperious papacy in a degrading bondage.

In England, Moravianism was the pioneer of Methodism; and so it was in Ireland. In 1745, an English soldier in Dublin formed a small society of pious people, and began to preach to them. Just at this juncture, Benjamin La Trobe, a young student in connection with the Baptists, having finished his studies at the university of Glasgow, came to Dublin, and became the leader of the little band, gathered together by the soldier's exertions, thirty of whom already belonged to different religious churches. In the same year, John Cennick withdrew himself from Whitefield's connexion, and transferred all the societies that he had been the means

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 157.

of forming, to the care of the Moravians, while he himself became a Moravian minister. At the request of the society, organised by the soldier, and now presided over by Benjamin La Trobe, John Cennick came to Dublin in June, 1746, and began to preach in a chapel in Skinner's Alley, which the society had hired from the Baptists. The place was soon crowded with hearers, and the society increased to about five hundred members. 1747 Age 44

Soon after this, Cennick had to attend a Moravian synod in Germany. During his absence, Thomas Williams, one of Wesley's itinerants, came to Dublin. Williams was a man of attractive appearance, pleasing manners, and good address. Holmes, in his "History of the United Brethren," says that Williams prevailed on several members of the society to leave the Moravians and join the Methodists, and we have no authority to deny the statement. It may be true, or it may be otherwise. Certain it is, that, by some means, Williams formed a separate society, and in a few weeks wrote to Wesley,[1] who determined to visit Ireland without delay. The results of this were vastly important. Forty-two times Wesley crossed the Irish Channel, and spent, in his different visits, at least half-a-dozen years of his laborious life in the emerald isle. Ireland yielded him some of the most eminent of his coadjutors—Thomas Walsh, Adam Clarke, Henry Moore, and others; and Irishmen were ordained by Providence to found Methodism, or to aid in founding it, in the North American British provinces, in the West Indies, in Africa, in India, and in Australia.

Wesley landed in Dublin Bay on Sunday morning, August 9. His host was Mr. Lunell, a banker,[2] who afterwards gave £400 towards the erection of the Methodist chapel in Whitefriar Street.[3]

On the day of his landing, Wesley preached, in St. Mary's church, to "as gay and senseless a congregation as he ever saw." Next morning he met Thomas Williams's society at five; and at six preached in the large room, which was not large enough to contain the congregation. He then went to

[1] Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 308.
[2] *Irish Evangelist*, Dec. 1, 1866.
[3] Wesley's Works, vol. iii., p. 406.

1747 Age 44 Mr. R——, the curate of St. Mary's, who "professed abundance of goodwill," and commended Wesley's sermon; but "expressed the most rooted prejudice against lay preachers, or preaching out of a church; and said, 'the Archbishop of Dublin was resolved to suffer no such irregularities in his diocese.'"

The day after, Wesley waited on the archbishop; spent above two hours in conversation with his grace; and answered abundance of objections.

Meanwhile, Wesley and John Trembath (who was with him) continued preaching in a chapel, originally designed for a Lutheran church, which would accommodate about four hundred people. This was in Marlborough Street,[1] and was crowded with poor and rich, and ministers of every denomination. Wesley devoted every morning to an explanation of the rules of the Methodist societies, and preached twice a day to many more than the meeting-house would hold. Four days after his arrival, he wrote as follows, to his friend Mr. Ebenezer Blackwell:—

"I have found a home in this strange land. I am at Mr. Lunell's just as at the Foundery; only, that I have not such attendance here; for I meet the people at another part of the town. For natural sweetness of temper, for courtesy and hospitality, I have never seen any people like the Irish. Indeed, all I converse with are only English transplanted into another soil; and they are much mended by the removal, having left all their roughness and surliness behind them. They receive the word of God with all gladness and readiness of mind. The danger is, that it should not take deep root, that it should be as seed falling on stony ground.

"Mr. Lunell and his family desire their best respects to Mrs. Blackwell and you. His daughter can rejoice in God her Saviour. They propose to spend the winter in England."[2]

Saturday, August 15, Wesley arranged to see, at Mr. Lunell's, all who wished to speak with him. He writes: "I found scarce any Irish among them. At least ninety-nine in a hundred of the native Irish remain in the religion of their forefathers. The Protestants, whether in Dublin or elsewhere, are almost all transplanted lately from England. Nor is it any wonder, that those who are born papists generally live

[1] *Irish Evangelist*, Dec. 1, 1866.
[2] Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 157.

and die such, when the protestants can find no better ways to convert them than penal laws and acts of parliament." 1747 Age 44

He ascertained, by personal examination, that the Dublin society, formed by Williams, consisted of about two hundred and eighty members, "many of whom appeared to be strong in faith." Mr. La Trobe, the Moravian preacher, took alarm; read to his congregation the "Short View of the Difference between the Moravians," etc.; and gave utterance to "bitter words"; but this did service to the Methodists rather than otherwise.

After spending exactly a fortnight in Dublin, Wesley returned to England, and was succeeded by his brother Charles, who arrived on September 9, with Charles Perronet as his companion.

During the fortnight which had elapsed since Wesley left, a mob had broken into the Marlborough Street chapel, and destroyed all before them; goods of a considerable value had been stolen; the pulpit and benches had been burnt openly in the street, and several of the Methodists beaten with shillalahs. Charles found that a new nickname had been given to the poor Methodists. John Cennick, in his zeal against popish idolatry, had said, "I curse and blaspheme all the gods in heaven, but the Babe that lay in Mary's lap, the Babe that lay in swaddling clouts"; and, because of that, the populace called him "swaddling John," and the Methodists "Swaddlers." The Methodists were now without a meeting-house, and Charles Wesley, at the peril of his life, regularly preached on Oxmanton Green; but, within a month, he bought a house near Dolphin's Barn, the whole ground floor of which was a weaver's workshop.[1] He writes on October 10, to Mr. Blackwell:—"At my first coming here, we were so persecuted, that no one in Dublin would venture to let us a house or a room; but now their hearts are turned, and we have the offer of several convenient places."[2] And, in another letter, to his brother, dated October 9, he remarks, that he must either buy the house near Dolphin's Barn, or get some other lodgings, or take his flight. "*Here* I can stay

[1] Smith's "Methodism in Ireland," p. 12.
[2] *Methodist Magazine*, 1848, p. 516.

1747 Age 44 no longer. A family of squalling children, a landlady just ready to lie in, a maid who has no time to do the least thing for us, are some of our inconveniences. Our two rooms for four people allow no opportunity for four people. Charles Perronet and I groan for elbow room in our press-bed; our diet is answerable to our lodgings; we have no one to mend our clothes and stockings, and no money to buy more."[1] Under such circumstances, the weaver's shop was turned into a preaching house, and the rooms above it used as the Dublin home of the two Wesleys and their itinerants. Charles Wesley opened the "New House" on October 25, "by preaching to a great multitude within and without"; and, though he preached not fewer than five times during the day, and also attended a three hours' service at St. Patrick's, he "was as fresh" at night as he was when he commenced his labour in the morning. The Dublin society contributed upwards of £70 towards the expenses; Charles Wesley remained more than six months as their devoted minister; and Methodism in Ireland was fairly started.[2] Wesley also gave the Irish Methodists a hymn-book of 336 pages, entitled "Hymns and Sacred Poems. Dublin: printed in the year 1747." The hymns were 246 in number, and embodied much of the Methodist history of the past eight years; but, with this brief notice, we must leave them.

On his return to England, at the end of August, Wesley made his way from Holyhead to Bristol, preaching in streets, in churchyards, on tombstones, in meadows, in castle yards, and wherever he had a chance. At Cardiff, he found the society filled with vain janglings, by J. Prosser, "an honest, well meaning man; but no more qualified, either by nature or grace, to expound Scripture, than to read lectures in logic or algebra."

Hurrying up to London, which he reached on September 11, he recommenced his ministry in Moorfields, and declares, that, excepting that at West Street, he knew no congregation in London so serious as this. He made brief visits to Shoreham, Newington, and Lewisham, where he employed himself

[1] Whitehead's Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 320.
[2] C. Wesley's Journal.

in writing. He examined the London classes, "and every person severally, touching that bane of religion, evil speaking." He witnessed some happy deaths; among others that of Mrs. Witham, "an eminent pattern of calm boldness for the truth; of simplicity and godly sincerity; of zeal for God, and for all good works; and of self denial in every kind." He advised his preachers, and wrote to one of them as follows:—"In public preaching, speak not one word against opinions of any kind. We are not to fight against notions, but sins. Least of all should I advise you once to open your lips against predestination. It would do more mischief than you are aware of. Keep to our one point, present inward salvation by faith, by the Divine evidence of sins forgiven." [1] 1747 Age 44

Having spent eleven weeks in London and its vicinity, he set out, on November 30, for Bristol, calling at Salisbury on his way. Five weeks before, Westley Hall, the base husband of his sister Martha, had infamously deserted his wife and family. The following is an *extract* from a letter published in the *Gentleman's Magazine*.[2] Some parts of the letter are so grossly filthy that it would be a pollution to insert them.

"SALISBURY, *October* 30, 1747.

"There have been, for some years past, a considerable number of Methodists in this city, who were at first collected, and have since continued under the guidance of Mr. Hall, as their minister. This man, by an uncommon appearance of sanctity, joined with indefatigable labour in field and house preaching, drew multitudes of the meaner sort, both of Dissenters and the Established Church, to attend him. And, though he has continually advanced the grossest absurdities, both in his preaching and writings, yet he has so bewitched his followers, that his words had greater weight with them than the words of Christ and His apostles.

"Many sober and judicious persons have often expressed their fears, that the nocturnal meetings held at his house were scenes of debauchery; for, now and then, a bastard child was brought into the world by some of his female devotees. . . . . Last Wednesday, he took formal leave of his corrupted flock, and had the impudence to justify his infamous conduct from the case of Elkanah (1 Sam. i. 1, 2), which he largely expounded. On Friday morning he set out for London, having first stripped his wife (a virtuous woman by whom he has had several children) of all her childbed linen, and whatever he could readily convert into money, leaving

[1] Whitehead's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 239.
[2] *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1747, p. 531.

1747 Age 41 her in the deepest distress. The fire of jealousy has broken out in many families, where *wives* or *daughters* were his followers."

Wesley reached the desolate home of his poor sister on December 1, and wrote :—

"From the concurring accounts of many witnesses, who spoke no more than they personally knew, I now learned as much as is hitherto brought to light concerning the fall of poor Mr. Hall. Twelve years ago, he was, without question, filled with faith and the love of God. He was a pattern of humility, meekness, seriousness, and above all, of self denial ; so that in all England I knew not his fellow. It were easy to point out the several steps, whereby he fell from his steadfastness ; even till he fell into a course of adultery, yea, and avowed it in the face of the sun !"

Wesley spent two days with his unhappy sister, and then says : "I took my leave of this uncomfortable place, and set out for Bristol." Two months later, he returned to Salisbury to see the poor miserable wretch ; but he was refused admittance, and his sister also was shut out of doors.

Nothing now remains, except to notice Wesley's publications during 1747. The Dublin hymn-book has been mentioned. The others were the following :—

1. "A Word to a Protestant." 12mo, 16 pages.

2. "A Word to a Freeholder." 12mo, four pages. This, as already stated, was written at Exeter, while halting on a journey, and on the eve of a parliamentary election.

3. "A Letter to the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of London ; occasioned by his lordship's late charge to his clergy." 12mo, 32 pages. Wesley replies to the bishop's accusations, and concludes thus :—

"Our one aim is, to proselyte sinners to repentance. If this be not done, we will stand condemned ; not as well meaning fools, but as devils incarnate ; but if it be, then, my lord, neither you nor any man beside can oppose and fortify people against us, without being found even to fight against God. There are, in and near Moorfields, ten thousand poor souls, for whom Christ died, rushing headlong into hell. Is Dr. Bulkeley, the parochial minister, both willing and able to stop them ? If so, let it be done, and I have no place in these parts. I go, and call other sinners to repentance. But if, after all that he has done, and all he can do, they are still in the broad way to destruction, let me see if God will put a word even in my mouth. My lord, the time is short. I am past the noon of life. Your lordship is old and full of days, having passed the usual age of

man.[1] It cannot therefore be long before we shall both stand naked before God. Will you then rejoice in your success in opposing our doctrine? The Lord God grant it may not be said in that hour, 'These have perished in their iniquity; but their blood I require at thy hands.'—I am, your lordship's dutiful son and servant, 1747 — Age 44

"JOHN WESLEY."

Appended to the letter is a magnificent hymn, of nine twelve lined stanzas, expressive of a calm and firm determination still to persevere, at all hazards, in preaching the gospel of his great Master.[2]

4. "Lessons for Children." Part II., 12mo, 108 pages. The lessons are fifty-four in number, and consist of Scripture selections, from the time of the Israelites passing over Jordan to the reign of Hezekiah.

5. "Primitive Physic; or an easy and natural Method of curing most Diseases." 12mo, 119 pages. The publication of this remarkable book arose out of the great success of Wesley's dispensary, opened in 1746. At the time of his death, it had reached its twenty-third edition.[3] It has often been ridiculed; but perhaps unwisely. The Rev. Samuel Romilly Hall remarks:—"A medical gentleman of Leeds, reputed as eminently intelligent and skilful in his profession, has declared to me, that the unfriendly criticisms, so freely given on Wesley's 'Primitive Physic,' are altogether unwarrantable. He affirms, that, judged of in comparison with other non-professional works of the same class, and of the same date, the 'Primitive Physic' is incomparably superior to anything that he knows."[4]

Besides, those who laugh at Wesley's "Primitive Physic" ought to remember:—(1) At no remote period from Wesley's day, it was not unusual for Christian ministers to practise medicine. (2) Wesley says, "For six and twenty years, I had made anatomy and physic the diversion of my

[1] Bishop Gibson died the year after this was written.

[2] Hymns 439 and 440, in the Wesleyan Hymn-Book, are a part of it.

[3] The writer has a copy of the thirteenth edition, published in 1768, with a large number of emendations and new prescriptions, in Wesley's own handwriting,—evidently the copy which he himself revised for a new edition.

[4] Hall's Lecture on Wesley's Death-bed.

1747 Age 44 leisure hours." (3) Wesley was not a quack. "I took," says he, "into my assistance an apothecary, and an experienced surgeon."

It is a remarkable incident, that the medical profession, so generally impatient of medical empirics, allowed Wesley's work to circulate for nearly thirty years before any of their honourable fraternity deigned to notice or denounce it. In 1776, an octavo pamphlet of 83 pages was published with the following title:—"An Examination of the Rev. Mr. John Wesley's Primitive Physic; showing that a great number of the prescriptions therein contained are founded on ignorance of the medical art, and of the power and operations of medicine; and, that it is a publication calculated to do essential injury to the health of those persons who may place confidence in it. By W. Hawes, M.D." Of the medical merits of this production we have no ability to judge. In many instances, it is in the highest degree ironical; though its author affirms, he was totally unknown to Wesley, and had no personal animosity against him. Dr. Hawes was unquestionably a man of great eminence in his profession; but he is chiefly known as the founder of the Humane Society, thirty of whose managers and directors attended his funeral in 1808.

Before closing the present chapter of Wesley's history, it must be added, that, about the same time that his "Primitive Physic" was given to the public, he also issued a small pamphlet, at the price of twopence, entitled "Receipts for the Use of the Poor"; but as these were extracted from the former publication no further notice is needed.

Butler & Tanner, The Selwood Printing Works, Frome, and London.

Teaching = Ministry for Wesley — p. 101–2

Catholic Sp. asked by Whitefield — p. 312

In School Ch'd — p. 437

In Perf — early toc. — p. 461 ff

Great Prayer — p. 465

Wesley on L.S. — p. 501

Wesley on Ch. Constitution — p. 508 ff Shift